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Thomas F. Torrance

THE

# WORKS

OF

# JOHN WITHERSPOON, D.D.

SOMETIME MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT PAISLEY, AND LATE PRESIDENT OF PRINCETON COLLEGE, IN NEW JERSEY.

CONTAINING

## ESSAYS, SERMONS, &c.

ON

## IMPORTANT SUBJECTS;

INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE AND ESTABLISH THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY GRACE, AND TO POINT OUT ITS INLFUENCE ON HOLINESS OF LIFE.

TOGETHER WITH HIS

## LECTURES ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY, ELOQUENCE AND DIVINITY;

## HIS SPEECHES IN THE AMERICAN CONGRESS;

AND MANY OTHER VALUABLE PIECES, NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED IN THIS COUNTRY.

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# ESSAYS

ON

# IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

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# LECTURES

ON

# DIVINITY.

## LECTURE I.

IT is a very agreeable thing to see a number of young persons determined to apply themselves to the study of divinity. We must charitably hope that they are actuated by the noblest principles; that they are resolved to devote their life and talents to the service of Christ in the gospel. He is a good Master; his service is liberty. They have not any flattering prospect of an illustrious or opulent state; but they may have in that office the greatest inward consolation, and very commonly more serenity and peace, and as much of the real and desirable enjoyment of this life, as any class of men whatever.

It is altogether agreeable to the design of this institution, to have young men of piety and ability

fitted for the public ſervices of the churches. This was the very point in view with the worthy founders of this ſeminary, ſome of whom are yet alive; and as there was never, perhaps, any ſeminary, the ſupport of which was more the effect of faith and dependence upon God, ſo it is to be hoped that he will honour many of the youth brought up in it, with employment in his vineyard and ſucceſs in his ſervice.

If I may be allowed to ſay any thing perſonal, I incline to add, that it is peculiarly agreeable to me. Nothing would give me a higher pleaſure, than being inſtrumental in furniſhing the minds, and improving the talents of thoſe who may hereafter be the miniſters of the everlaſting goſpel. The hope of it is indeed the chief comfort in my preſent ſtation. Notwithſtanding the many encouraging circumſtances that have happened ſince my arrival here, and the evident ſmiles of Providence upon the College, yet I confeſs I have often regretted the want of a paſtoral charge. After having been for twenty-three years conſtantly employed in preaching the goſpel to a numerous, obedient, and affectionate people, to be employed in a way of life ſo conſiderably different, muſt have created ſome uneaſineſs. Juſt figure to yourſelves, one that had been ſo long accuſtomed to preach to a crowded audience of from twelve to fifteen hundred ſouls every day, and all ſubject to my private overſight and diſcipline; now to have ſuch a thin and negligent aſſembly, and moſtly compoſed of thoſe who think themſelves under no obligation to attend but when they pleaſe. In ſuch a ſituation the ſphere of uſe-

fulneſs ſeems to be greatly narrowed; but if I am made inſtrumental in ſending out faithful labourers into the harveſt, it will be an ample recompenſe. For as one of great zeal and diſcernment expreſſed himſelf to me in Britain: "You will be greatly mortified to ſee the difference between a ſmall country ſociety in America, and a large city congregation in Scotland; but if you be inſtrumental in ſending out miniſters of the New Teſtament, it will be a ſtill more important ſtation, for every gownſman is a legion."

In this preliminary diſcourſe, what I chiefly mean is to repeat, and endeavour to bring you to enter into the great and leading view which you ought to have in your ſtudies, and which I deſire to have ſtill before my eyes in teaching. This may be expreſſed in one ſentence: to unite together piety and literature—to ſhew their relation to, and their influence one upon another—and to guard againſt any thing that may tend to ſeparate them, and ſet them in oppoſition one to another. This is of more conſequence, and indeed of more difficulty than perhaps you will as yet be able to apprehend; experience, however, has taught me to view it in a moſt important light. Some perſons truly, and perhaps eminently pious, from an inward conviction that religion is better than all the learning in the world; and perhaps obſerving that ill-principled perſons, the more learning they have, are the more dangerous to the truth—have come to deſpiſe learning itſelf, as if the natural talent was to blame for the moral depravity. Of thoſe who profeſs religion, ſome alſo, from a forward zeal, are impatient to begin

the miniſtry before they are fitted for the charge. Such perſons are often quite inſenſible to the hurt they do to the intereſt of religion, and how much they injure the truths of God by their manner of handling them. On the other hand, there are ſome who promiſed very well in early life, but applying with vigour and ſucceſs to their ſtudies, became too much enamoured with human wiſdom, and thought themſelves ſuch great ſcholars that they were too proud to be Chriſtians. Intellectual pride is perhaps as dangerous a diſtemper as any we are liable to. I have often thought that great natural abilities, and great acquired knowledge, operate as a temptation, in a way ſimilar to great wealth or external property; they are apt to intoxicate the mind, to produce ſelf-ſufficiency and contempt of others, and to take away from that humility which is the greateſt beauty, or, if the expreſſion be proper, the real glory of a Chriſtian. I would therefore begin, by earneſtly beſeeching you to keep clear views of the importance both of piety and literature, and never ſuffer them to be divided. Piety, without literature, is but little profitable; and learning, without piety, is pernicious to others, and ruinous to the poſſeſſor. Religion is the grand concern to us all, as we are men; whatever be our calling and profeſſion, the ſalvation of our ſouls is the one thing needful. It is however further, and eſſentially neceſſary for a miniſter. I do not mean that it is neceſſary to the being of a miniſter in the viſible church, or to the efficacy of the ordinances of the goſpel to thoſe who receive them. This is, properly ſpeaking, a Popiſh tenet, againſt which

there is a question in the Shorter Catechism expressly levelled: "How do the sacraments become effectual to salvation? The sacraments (and it must be equally true of every other ordinance) become effectual to salvation," &c. Some weak enthusiasts have gone into this mistake, and have said it is as impossible for an unconverted minister to convert a soul, as for a dead man to beget a living child. A similitude is no argument at all, properly speaking, but only an illustration, if the thing itself be just. In this case it is wholly misapplied; for it is neither the converted nor the unconverted minister that converts the soul, but the power of omnipotent grace, by any means that the God of grace sees proper to employ. But, on the other hand, this takes nothing away from the necessity of religion in a minister, when properly understood. It is certainly necessary, in the most absolute sense, to the faithful discharge of a minister's trust; and for the same reason, it is of the greatest importance to his success. True religion seems to give a man that knowledge which is proper for a minister to direct and turn into its proper channel the knowledge he may otherwise acquire. It seems necessary to make a minister active and diligent, upright and impartial, happy and successful.

On this subject I must give you the following particular advices.

I. Do not content yourselves barely with sound principles, much less turn religion into controversy, but seek for inward vital comfort, to know in whom you have believed, and endeavour after the greatest

ſtrictneſs and tenderneſs of practice. When I deſire you to look for inward vital comfort, I do not mean that you ſhould wholly ſuſpend your preparations for the miniſtry, or immediately lay aſide thoughts of it, becauſe you have not all that clearneſs and ſatisfaction concerning your own ſtate, that you ſhould both deſire and endeavour to attain. There is hardly any principle ſo good, or any ſo clear, but it is within the reach of temptations, and capable of being perverted. Some being deeply convinced that it is a dreadful thing to preach an unknown Saviour, and not ſeeing reaſon to be wholly ſatisfied with themſelves, have been thrown into doubts, and embaraſſed with ſcruples, and have given up wholly that ſacred office, to which they ſeemed both inclined and called; this ſeems to be taking a very unhappy, and a very blameable courſe. If ſuch fears had excited them to give all diligence to make their calling and election ſure, they would have been properly improved. But laying aſide the thoughts of the miniſtry only on this account, ſeems to carry in it a ſuppoſition, that they either do not intend, or do not hope ever to be better. It is certainly to the public a much greater calamity that there ſhould be a bad miniſter, than a bad man of ſome other profeſſion; but to the perſon himſelf, if he die in an unrenewed ſtate, it will bring but little comfort. I would have you upon this ſubject to obſerve, that real Chriſtians have very different degrees of comfort, and that if we examine the ſacred oracles with care and accuracy, we ſhall find that what is termed aſſurance, is juſt the grace of hope in lively exerciſe. It is called the aſſurance of hope, Heb. vi. 2.

as well as elsewhere, and as every real believer has some degree of hope, which makes him rest and rely on Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel, so perhaps there are not very many who have such a degree of steady and firm assurance as to exclude all doubting. I know there are some that have taken it up as a principle, and make assurance, even in this reflex sense, the essence of faith; but when it comes to experience, except the phraseology itself, I do not find they differ much from others.

I mentioned to you particularly, strictness and tenderness of practice. This is of the utmost moment, as the fruit and evidence of real religion. All principles are valuable but as they produce practice. But to explain strictness and tenderness of practice a little, observe, that the expression of tenderness is borrowed from that passage of Scripture found in 2 Kings xxii. 19. 2 Chron. iii. 4. where of Josiah it is said, "because thine heart was tender," &c.; it signifies a heart easily susceptible of conviction, and obedient to reproof. When this is applied to the carriage of one devoted to the service of the ministry, I think it implies, 1. The strictest watchfulness to discover sin and duty, and a disposition to obey the dictates of conscience with respect to both. 2. A concern to avoid, not only what is in itself directly and certainly sinful, but whatever is but doubtful, according to the apostolic doctrine, "he that doubteth," &c. 3. A willingness to abstain from lawful things, if liable to exception, or likely to be matter of offence.

II. A second advice I would give you upon this

ſubject is, that you ſhould remember the importance of the exerciſes of piety, and the duties of the cloſet. As there are no forms of prayer with us, the habit of cloſet devotion is neceſſary to give a miniſter fulneſs, propriety, and fervency in prayer. This for his own ſake alſo he ſhould attend to; for it is neceſſary to the preſervation and improvement of the ſpiritual life. Pray without ceaſing, ſays the apoſtle; intimating that the very ſpirit and temper of a believer ſhould be that of dependence upon God, and deriving by faith from him every neceſſary ſupply. In order to recommend it particularly to you, I would obſerve that it is peculiarly neceſſary to be begun in early life; perhaps there are few, if any inſtances of perſons coming to a greater degree of fervour in devotion, or attention to the duty of it, in advanced years, than they had in youth. There are many particulars in which an aged, if a real Chriſtian, will inſenſibly improve: he will improve in meekneſs and humility, in prudence and judgment, in attention to Providence, in purity of principle, in ſubmiſſion to the divine will; but fervour in devotion muſt be begun early, while the paſſions are ſtrong, and continued by the power of reaſon and habit. Perhaps you may think it of ſmall moment, yet ſome very judicious and experienced Chriſtians have given it as a rule upon this ſubject, to be ſtrictly punctual and regular in point of time, and even place.

III. Early fix, and ſtudy under the influence of thoſe principles which ſhould animate all your future labours, a concern for the glory of God, and love for the ſouls of men. If theſe are the princi-

ples of ſtudy, they will keep you from miſtaking the way, and having taken early and deep root, they will bring forth fruit more abundantly in after life. Living by faith is extremely proper for cultivating theſe principles. Keeping the whole ſyſtem of revealed truth in view, will ſhew its moment; and particularly what is revealed concerning the eternal condition of men, cannot fail to fill us with a concern for their welfare.

IV. Be diligent to acquire every neceſſary qualification, and yet ſtudy ſelf-denial in the uſe of them. This is one of the moſt important, and, at the ſame time, one of the moſt difficult attainments. It is comparatively eaſy to avoid vain glory, if at the ſame time we indulge in ſloth and negligence. But to meditate upon theſe things, to give ourſelves wholly to them, for the glory of God and the good of ſouls, without having it in view to ſerve ourſelves, this is real excellence, and here lies the greateſt difficulty. Form yourſelves to a true taſte and real knowledge; let your capacity want no improvement that it may be more uſeful, but beware of ſtudying only to ſhine.

V. Laſtly, Guard againſt the temptation that is moſt incident to your ſtate and ſituation, particularly making the exerciſes of piety and the ordinances of the goſpel, matter of ſcience and criticiſm, rather than the means of edification. When ſtudents begin to learn how things ought to be done, they are apt at all times to be paſſing their judgment of the manner, inſtead of improving the matter of public inſtruction; not that it is poſſible to be wholly inattentive to this, but let it not carry you ſo much

away, as to hinder your teaching others as humble Chriſtians, as well as diſcourſing to them as able miniſters.

## LECTURE II.

LET us now conſider learning as an important qualification of a miniſter. On this ſubject, after ſaying a few things on its moment, I ſhall endeavour to point out to you what branches of ſtudy it will be your intereſt to apply yourſelves to with greateſt diligence. As to the importance of learning, there being no reaſon for us in this age to expect immediate or ſupernatural revelation, the acquiring a proper meaſure of knowledge by ſtudy and application, is abſolutely neceſſary. No parts or capacity are ſufficient without this; nay, ſuch is the wiſe order of Providence, that to improve a talent is to poſſeſs and ſecure it; to neglect it is to loſe it. There is ſcarce any thing that a man could once do ever ſo well, but if he lay aſide the practice he will loſe the faculty. It is lamentable to think what a poor and contemptible figure ſome perſons make in advanced life, who had good talents from nature, but ſuffered them to ruſt in ſloth, or to be blunted by ſenſuality and ſelf-indulgence. Learning is neceſſary to keep the ſacred truths we are obliged to handle from contempt. Great weakneſs and inſufficiency expoſe the miniſtry to contempt, even amongſt the meaneſt of the people; but it is eſpecially a ſtumbling block to thoſe who are themſelves perſons of literature and taſte. It is ex-

tremely difficult for them to receive and reliſh things delivered in a mean, ſlovenly manner. Suppoſe, for example, one who is not ſo much as ſenſible of the groſſeſt improprieties of ſtyle, ſpeaking in the hearing of perſons of rank, or of real knowledge; and as even a good man is not always wholly free from vanity and affectation, ſuppoſe, too, that the ſpeaker ſhould ſwell his diſcourſe with high and pompous phraſes, or hard and out of the way ſcientific terms; only think how great would be the temptation to ſuch perſons as I have mentioned, to neglect what is good, from its being mixed with what they ſo juſtly deſpiſe. Learning is alſo neceſſary to repel the attacks of adverſaries. The goſpel has never been without enemies, from without and from within; and as it is uſually by means of human learning that they make the attack, it is neceſſary that ſome ſhould be ready to meet them, and able to unravel the ſubtilty with which they lie in wait to deceive. I have often thought that there was ſomething very admirable in the choice our Saviour made of his firſt miniſters, to aſſiſt us in adjuſting our views upon this ſubject: for the more immediate manifeſtation of divine power, when the wiſe and great in the world were united againſt his truths, he choſe twelve illiterate fiſhermen, which ſhould teach us not to over-rate the wiſdom of the wiſe; and leſt in after ages we ſhould be tempted to under-rate it, he choſe one apoſtle, able and learned, and to him he gave the moſt ſignal ſucceſs, ſo that he laboured more abundantly than them all, and was honoured to be the penman of a very conſiderable part of the code of the New Teſtament.

But let me now proceed to conſider what branches of ſtudy it will be your intereſt to apply to with the greateſt diligence; and if I am able to do this with propriety, I am perſuaded you will find it of the moſt ſignal ſervice. A traveller loſes time upon his journey by going out of the road, as well as by ſtanding ſtill; and if his direction is very wrong, the time is more than loſt, for his diſtance is increaſed, and his ſtrength is exhauſted. On this ſubject be pleaſed to attend to the following remarks. There is no branch of literature without its uſe. If it were poſſible for a miniſter to be acquainted with every branch of ſcience, he would be more fit for public uſefulneſs. The underſtanding which God hath given us, and every object that he hath preſented to it, may be improved to his glory. A truly good man does grow both in holineſs and uſefulneſs, by every new diſcovery that is made to him; therefore learning in general is to be eſteemed, acquired, and improved; and perhaps I may alſo ſay, it were therefore good if a miniſter were a perſon of extenſive knowledge. But our time and capacity are both limited, and we cannot do all that we could wiſh. On the ſubject of literature in general, obſerve, that reading a few books well choſen, and digeſting them thoroughly, together with the frequent exerciſe of reflection, will make a knowing and intelligent man; but to make what the world calls a learned man, or a great ſcholar, requires a very general knowledge of authors, books, and opinions of all kinds. A perſon of great diſcernment may perhaps obſerve a ſtill nicer diſtinction, in the uſe of epithets in our own language. The phraſe,

*a man of learning*, according to its preſent acceptation in Europe, almoſt always ſuppoſes and includes taſte in the belles lettres. A great ſcholar, or a man of erudition, always carries in it the idea of much reading; the firſt always ſuppoſes genius, the other may conſiſt with very moderate talents. A pretty large circle of the ſciences is taught in our ſchools and colleges; and though many think it too extenſive, yet ſomething of the principles of the whole may be underſtood by a perſon of capacity and diligence; his knowledge may be true and juſt, though not minute. A man may not be a mathematician or an aſtronomer, and yet underſtand ſomething of the true ſyſtem of the univerſe. He may underſtand many ſciences ſo far as to comprehend the reaſoning of thoſe more deeply ſkilled, who ſpeak and write of them, and ſo as to ſpeak with politeneſs and conſiſtency within his own line, in every thing he ſays of them; but to excel in any particular branch of ſcience, and to know every thing upon that branch that may be known, is the work of a lifetime. Grammar, mathematics, aſtronomy, oratory, hiſtory, law, phyſic, poetry, painting, ſtatuary, architecture, muſic; nay, the ſubordinate diviſions of ſome of theſe ſciences, ſuch as, anatomy, botany, chemiſtry, are all of them ſufficient to employ a life to carry them to perfection. It is therefore plainly in itſelf improbable, that almoſt any man can attain a high degree of perfection in all, or indeed in many of theſe branches of ſtudy. There is even ſomething more to be obſerved; the perſon who addicts himſelf to any one of thoſe ſtudies, ſo

as to be an adept, or really a complete maſter in it, cannot be a man of extenſive knowledge, and it is but ſeldom that he can be a man of a liberal or noble turn of mind, becauſe his time is conſumed by the peculiarities, and his mind narrowed by attending to one particular art. He is likewiſe apt to eſteem his favourite ſtudy ſo much, as to confine all excellence, and even all capacity to it. A profound botaniſt, ſmitten with the love of flowers and herbs, if he meets with a man that does not know one from another, and does not value a ranunculus or anemone more than a pile of common ſpear-graſs, has a ſovereign contempt of ſuch an underſtanding. Dean Swift takes notice of a curious expreſſion this way of a dancing-maſter, at whoſe ſchool the famous Harley, Earl of Oxford, had been in his youth; when he was made Secretary of State, he ſaid, he wondered what the Queen could ſee in that man, for he was one of the greateſt dunces he ever taught.

Hence you may obſerve, that all who are devoted to the particular ſtudy of one ſmall branch, are generally conſidered as pedants, and indeed commonly are ſuch as are underſtood by that expreſſion. Their thoughts have taken ſuch a courſe, and their ideas themſelves taken ſuch a tincture from their favourite ſtudy, that they ſee every thing through that medium, and are apt to introduce the expreſſions belonging to it, upon every ſubject and occaſion. Mr Addiſon, in one of his Spectators, obſerves, that every man whoſe knowledge is confined to one particular ſubject is a pedant, as a mere ſoldier, a mere actor, a mere merchant, &c. but that the learned

pedant, though generally moſt laughed at, is of all others the moſt tolerable, becauſe he has generally ſomething to communicate that is worth hearing. But I obſerve, that the moſt reaſonable pedants, and the leaſt to be blamed, are thoſe whoſe whole hearts are ſet upon what is their buſineſs for life. Therefore, though a ſchoolmaſter can ſcarcely ſpeak without citing Virgil or Horace, he is to be indulged; and though he may not make the moſt diſtinguiſhed figure in public or polite life, yet he is uſeful in his generation, and fit for the diſcharge of his truſt. Therefore a miniſter that is a mere theologian, well acquainted with the Scriptures, though with few other books, or books upon other ſubjects, and is maſter of the controverſies that belong to divinity, properly ſo called, is certainly much more to be pardoned, than one ever ſo much ſkilled in any other ſcience without this. But what ſhall we ſay of those who [illegible] ſo very much, as to be chiefly diſtinguiſhed for that which they have leaſt to do with? I have known a phyſician who was a much greater connoiſſeur in muſic than in medicine; and a divine, much more famous for accounts and calculation than for preaching. It is therefore, in my opinion, not any honour to a miniſter to be very famous in any branch that is wholly unconnected with theology; not that knowledge of any thing, properly ſpeaking, is either a diſadvantage or ground of reproach; but for a man to ſhew a deep knowledge of ſome particular ſubject, plainly diſcovers that he hath beſtowed more time and pains upon it, than he had to ſpare from his neceſſary duty. It is alſo uſual in all ſuch caſes, that the fa-

vourite purſuit infuſes ſuch a quantity of phraſes and alluſions into his language, as renders it ſtiff and improper, and ſometimes ridiculous.

Agreeably to theſe remarks I obſerve, that the aſſiſtant ſtudies to theology are chiefly the following. 1. Languages. 2. Moral Philoſophy. 3. Hiſtory, ſacred and profane. 4. Eloquence, including the belles lettres ſtudy in general.

I. Languages. Theſe, indeed, uſed to be reckoned eſſentially neceſſary to learning in general, immediately after the revival of learning in Europe: the Greek and Latin languages were ſtudied univerſally, and with great care. All authors who expected their works ſhould live any time, wrote in Latin; but ſince the cultivation of the languages of Europe, this has been gradually diſcontinued, and, except in ſome few ſcientific writings, has now wholly ceaſed. However, as the remains of the ancients are ſtill the ſtandard of taſte, all literary perſons ſhould make themſelves acquainted with the languages. It is to be lamented that many ſpend a great part of the time of their education in learning Latin and Greek, and yet few ever attain them to that perfection which alone can make the learning of a language of great moment, ſo that they can read the authors with pleaſure and profit, for the matter which they contain. This might be eaſily attained by almoſt any ſtudent after his grammar-ſchool and other education; and reading over the claſſics with ſome of the beſt critics upon them, would be a very improving ſtudy. Books of hiſtory and entertainment alſo, in Greek and Latin, would have a happy effect this way. The Hebrew language, alſo, is

very proper and useful for a divine, being the language in which a great part of the Scriptures were originally written, and not difficult to acquire, because we have but few writings in that language at all, and the language itself is not copious. To these I only add the study of the French language; it is both useful and ornamental. There is hardly any such thing as a learned education in Britain, where the French language is omitted. It was the first polished of all the modern languages of Europe, having been at least fifty years before the English in this respect; and though there are some branches of writing in which there are English authors not inferior to any of the French that I am acquainted with, yet, in general, there is to be found a greater purity, simplicity, and precision in the French authors, than in the English. But what indeed chiefly dispose me to recommend the French language to divines is, on account of the sound, calvinistic, reformation divinity. There are many more able and elegant writers in that language than in English; there are also some admirable practical treatises written by the Popish divines in French, as well as by the Jansenists of the Roman catholic communion. Jansenists and Molinists in the church of Rome, are just the same as Calists and Arminians among Protestants.

II. Moral Philosophy. The connection of this with divinity will be easily seen. It is a very pleasant and improving study in itself, or a good handmaid to the Christian morality; and the controversies upon that subject, which are all modern, stand

in immediate connection with the deiſtical controverſies, which it is neceſſary for a divine to make himſelf maſter of. There are few of the ancient writers of much value upon that ſubject, excepting Plato among the Greeks, and Cicero among the Latins, eſpecially the latter. The remains of Socrates, (to be collected from the writers of his country, but chiefly from Xenophon) the works of Epictetus, Marcus Antoninus, and Seneca, contain many moral ſentiments, but little or nothing of the principles of morals. I think the moſt beautiful moral writer of the ancients, is the author of the Tablature of Cebes. As to any thing contained in the ancients relative to the truth of theology, it will be found almoſt univerſally collected in Cudworth's Intellectual Syſtem.

III. Hiſtory, ſacred and profane. This is a ſtudy eaſy, pleaſant, and profitable; and, by a peculiar happineſs of this age, faſhionable. As a clergyman ſhould be a man of liberal knowledge, and fit for the converſation and ſociety of men of rank and letters, it is neceſſary that he be well acquainted with hiſtory; if he is not, he will be often ready to betray his ignorance before perſons who ſhould be much his inferiors in point of ſtudy. Beſides, you ſee a great part of the ſacred writings, both of the Old Teſtament and the New, conſiſts of hiſtory; and few things are more neceſſary to the juſt and critical ſtudy of the Scriptures than an acquaintance with hiſtory, with the original ſtate and gradual progreſs of human ſociety. It adds greatly, too, to a miniſter's knowledge of the human heart; in that reſpect it may be ſaid to be the way to that know-

ledge of the world which may be obtained at leaſt expence, and with perfect ſafety.

IV. Laſtly, Eloquence; that is to ſay, compoſition and criticiſm, including the whole of what is commonly called the belles lettres ſtudy. Nothing is more plain than the neceſſity of this ſcience. Public ſpeaking is to be the chief, or one of the chief parts of a miniſter's buſineſs for life. I ſhall not enlarge on this, having occaſion to ſpeak on it at great length in another department, which you have had, or may have an opportunity to hear. I ſhould have made more mention of books; but as I have written, at the particular deſire of ſome of the laſt year's ſcholars, a liſt of the principal and moſt valuable writers in every branch of ſcience, it will be more complete, for any that deſire it, to have copies of that liſt.

## LECTURE III.

THE ſubject on which we are now to enter, is the truth of the Chriſtian religion. I am ſenſible that every good man has a conviction of the truth of the goſpel, from its power and efficacy upon his own heart, diſtinct from, and ſuperior to all ſpeculative reaſoning. That deep and heart-felt ſenſe of the corruption and weakneſs of our nature, and of the power of indwelling ſin, which is inſeparable from the reality of religion, and the perception of the admirable fitneſs of redemption by the croſs to abaſe the pride of man, and to exalt the grace of God; to give conſolation to the ſinner, while it changes the heart; is highly ſatisfying to a conſi-

derate, if at the same time a serious person; so that, for his own sake, he would pay but little regard to all the foolish cavils of men of corrupt minds. Nay, there is something more; the whole system of the gospel, as depending upon and having constant reference to the cross, is so contrary to the taste of a carnal mind, and so far from carrying in it any of the marks of human wisdom, that it is impossible to suppose it a cunningly devised fable, and therefore we may cordially embrace and rely upon it as the power of God unto salvation. One thing more I would say by way of introduction: that the custom of some ministers, of constantly entertaining their hearers with a refutation of infidel objections upon every subject, is not much to be commended. This seems to proceed upon a supposition, that a great part of their audience is inclined to infidelity. There are times and places when that is proper, I admit; but there are many others in which it is either quite unnecessary, or even hurtful, as tending to bring people acquainted with what would perhaps never otherwise have fallen in their way. It is however certain, that since, in modern times especially, this controversy has been greatly agitated, and indeed of late almost all other controversies have been dropped on account of it, or lost in it, a student of divinity should be well informed upon it. I will therefore endeavour to state it to you with as much distinctness as I am able, and as much brevity as its nature will admit. The subject must be taken up a little differently, as we suppose we have to do with different adversaries—atheists and theists.

The controversy with the first perhaps it is un-

neceſſary to treat with much length, becauſe it is not difficult, and becauſe there are but few that plead the cauſe of infidelity upon this footing; yet ſome of the lateſt infidel writers, particularly David Hume, has raiſed ſuch objections as ſeem chiefly to point this way. The boundleſs ſcepticiſm he has endeavoured to introduce, would weaken the belief we have in the Deity, as much as in the goſpel; and, indeed, as he ſeldom attacks particulars, (except in the caſe of miracles) his enmity ſeems to be againſt religion in general, and not againſt the goſpel. The ſame thing may be ſaid of Voltaire, Helvetius, and other foreigners, though Voltaire deals very much in particular cavils, and of the moſt ſilly kind.

In the deiſtical controverſy, what commonly leads the way, is the neceſſity of revelation in general. This is to be proved from the ſtate of the heathen world before the coming of Chriſt. The chief circumſtances to be taken notice of are, 1. Their groſs ignorance. 2. Their abſurd notions of God, as of human ſhape, with many paſſions, and the worſt of vices. 3. Their impious and ſhocking rites, particularly human ſacrifices. 4. Their polytheiſm and multiplicity of gods. 5. Their great immorality. It is to be particularly obſerved, that theſe things were not confined to the barbarous nations, but, if there was any difference, it was rather more eminently the caſe with thoſe who were thought the moſt improved and civilized, the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. The firſt infidel writers in Europe, were chiefly employed in ſhewing the ſufficiency of reaſon as a guide to man in his conduct; of whom

Lord Herbert of Cherburg was one of the moſt early, and one of the moſt eminent. Their way of arguing is very fallacious; for they avail themſelves of that very improvement of reaſon which they owe to revelation, in order to ſhew revelation to be unneceſſary. The ſublime and noble conceptions of God as the Father of ſpirits, which, after they are diſcovered, can eaſily be ſhewn to be rational, are boaſted of as the productions of unbiaſſed reaſon: but the fair way of deciding the queſtion is to apply to thoſe nations that wanted revelation; that is to ſay, the Jewiſh and Chriſtian revelation, and there we ſhall ſee what reaſon, in the courſe of many ages, was able to do in fact. There is likewiſe more here than is commonly attended to; for there is the greateſt probability, that the ſmall meaſure of truth which was mixed with the heathen fables, was not the diſcovery of reaſon, but handed down by traditions. It is well known that the Egyptian theology, and their literature, whatever it was, was kept a ſecret, and was handed down from one to another by their prieſts, and it is as certain that the earlieſt Grecian philoſophers never expected that they could, nor pretended that they had diſcovered any of their opinions by reaſon, but they travelled to Egypt and the eaſtern countries, and brought it home as information which they had received from the ſages of thoſe countries. This was the caſe of Thales in particular, and after him of Pythagoras. Several ingenious writers have endeavoured to ſhew, that the heathen mythology contains, in many reſpects, a partial and adulterated view of the Scripture hiſtory. See on this ſubject, Abbe Banier's

Mythology of the Ancients, with regard to the Greeks and Romans, and Abbe Pluche's Hiſtory of the Heavens, with regard to the Egyptians.

But with reſpect to the neceſſity of revelation in general, what ſeems particularly deciſive is, that by a fair examination of the matter, and the univerſal conſent of all nations, men in a ſtate of nature are chargeable with guilt. Whatever may be ſaid, either of original ſin or inherent pollution, it cannot be denied that there is much moral evil in the world. So true is this, that the hiſtory of the world is little elſe than the hiſtory of human guilt. They that would evade this, by ſaying men are only imperfect, do not obſerve that they are guilty of ſuch crimes as are ſtrongly condemned by their own reaſon and conſcience. Now, whether there is any forgiveneſs of ſin and place for repentance, and if at all, upon what terms, can never be determined but by an expreſs revelation. This is implied in the nature of guilt. Guilt is a liableneſs to juſt puniſhment; now, whether God will remit a puniſhment which he may inflict with juſtice, muſt reſt ultimately with himſelf, and no reaſoning can decide upon it. Try it who will, every argument brought in favour of the remiſſion, will militate againſt the juſtice of the puniſhment. This appears from the very language of perſons diſpoſed to ſuch ſentiments, for they cannot help ſaying, and indeed they have nothing elſe to ſay, but that it is probable, for it would be hard to ſuppoſe that every tranſgreſſion ſhould be puniſhed with divine vengeance. But pray let us conſider this way of ſpeaking: where is the hardſhip? Is juſtice hard? On the contrary, it is glorious and

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amiable. I confeſs it is difficult for us, ſinful creatures, to confeſs, and ſtill more difficult from the heart to believe, that every ſin deſerves God's wrath and curſe, both in this life and that which is to come; it is, however, the neceſſary conſequence, not of one, but of the whole ſyſtem of Scripture truths. There you have in every page, the higheſt encomiums upon the mercy and compaſſion of God. Theſe are all without meaning, and contrary to truth, if it would have been the leaſt impeachment of the righteouſneſs of God to have ſuffered the penalty to take place. Pardon, if the word is underſtood, muſt be free. Benignity and goodneſs to the innocent, is a part of the character of the Deity in natural religion, but mercy to the guilty belongs wholly to revelation. Accordingly it is upon this point that all the heathen religions have turned. Expiation ſeems to have been the great purpoſe of all religion, whether true or falſe. "Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord*?" &c. The neceſſity of revelation was acknowledged by many of the heathens in their writings. Of theſe, the ſaying of Socrates to Alcibiades was a remarkable example; that it was reaſonable to expect God would ſend one into the world, to deliver men from ignorance and error, and bring them to the knowledge of himſelf.

* Micah vi. 6, 7.

## LECTURE IV.

### *On the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion.*

HAVING endeavoured to eſtabliſh the truth of revelation in general, we come to the truth of the Chriſtian religion in particular. The proofs of this are ſo many, and laid down ſo differently, according as the adverſaries of the truth have ſhifted their ground, that it is impoſſible to enumerate them, and indeed not eaſy to claſs them. There is one introductory way of reaſoning, which may be called comparative,—to reflect on the infinite difference between the Chriſtian and all other pretended revelations. If the neceſſity of revelation has been properly and fully eſtabliſhed, then compariſons between the ſeveral pretences to it ſeem to be juſt, and even concluſive. Now I think it does not admit of heſitation, that with reſpect to purity, conſiſtency, ſublimity, dignity, and every excellence which a manifeſtation of the true God muſt be ſuppoſed to have, the Chriſtian religion is ſuperior to every other. The heathen ſuperſtitions have not now ſo much as an advocate. Infidels do not now plead for Jupiter, Juno, Mars, and Apollo, but for the ſufficiency of human reaſon; and, indeed, an age or two after the publication of the goſpel, that whole corrupt ſyſtem, which had been ſupported ſo long by ignorance and credulity, fell to the ground.

Paſſing from this detached and preliminary conſideration, the proofs of the Chriſtian religion are

very commonly divided into evidence *internal* and *external*. By the firſt of theſe we are to underſtand the excellency of the doctrine, as agreeable to the dictates of reaſon and conſcience, and having a tendency to produce the happieſt effects. Under this head alſo comes the character of the Founder of the Chriſtian faith, and every thing connected with this or the former particular. By the external evidence, we are to underſtand the miracles wrought in atteſtation of the truth of the doctrine, the nature and ſubject of theſe miracles, the credibility of the witneſſes, and every thing neceſſary to ſupport this teſtimony. It is difficult, however, to collect the evidence under thoſe heads, without often intermixing the one with the other. I have therefore thought the evidences of the truth of the Chriſtian religion, might be as well divided in a different way. Firſt, into two heads under the following titles: 1. Collateral, and, 2. Direct and poſitive proof. And again, to divide the collateral into two parts, and take the one of them before, and the other after the direct evidence, under the titles of *preſumptive* and *conſequential*.

I. Let us conſider the preſumptive evidences of the truth of the Chriſtian religion, or thoſe circumſtances that recommend it to our eſteem and love, and are of the nature of ſtrong probabilities in its favour. Theſe we may, for order ſake, divide into ſuch as relate, 1. To the doctrine taught. 2. The Perſon who is the Author and Subject of it. 3. The circumſtances attending its publication, and other probabilities.

1. The doctrine taught. When this is conſidered

in the way of an argument for its actual truth, it rests upon this principle, that every doctrine that comes from God must be excellent; that therefore, if the doctrine did not appear of itself to be excellent, it would be rejected without further examination, because not worthy of God; and, on the contrary, that if it appears excellent, amiable, useful, it is some presumption that the claim of a divine original is just. It is a just reflection on Christ's doctrine, "Never man spake like this man," as well as the following, "No man can do the miracles that thou dost, except God be with him." Under this great head of excellence, or a doctrine worthy of God, may be considered separately—1. Its Sublimity. 2. Purity. 3. Efficacy. 4. Plainness. 5. Consistency.

1. Sublimity. The doctrines contained in Scripture concerning God, his works, and creatures, and his relation to them, is what must necessarily have the approbation of unprejudiced reason, and indeed is the most noble that can be conceived. His spiritual nature, infinitely removed from inactive matter, incapable of grossness, and of sensual indulgence. The unity of God, so contrary to the prevailing sentiments under heathenish darkness, yet how manifestly rational. Strange, indeed, that the whole world should have been in a mistake on this subject, and the Jews, a despised nation, in an obscure corner of Palestine, should alone have discovered and embraced it. The immensity of God, filling heaven and earth with his presence. His omnipotence, in creating all things by his word. His holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. To these we may add,

the conſtant influence of his providence, as the Lord of nature, the Witneſs and the Judge of all. Very beautifully the prophet ſays, "Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles cauſe rain?" ſo the apoſtle Paul, "Nevertheleſs he left not himſelf without a witneſs," &c. The moral government of God, as taught in Scripture, is exceedingly rational and ſatisfying, repreſenting his great patience and long-ſuffering to be followed by a time of holy and righteous retribution. The mixture of good and evil that is plainly to be obſerved, is by this means clearly explained, and fully accounted for. On the ſublimity of the Scripture doctrines, ſome are fond of dwelling upon the majeſty of God, and the ſublimity of the Scriptures in ſentiment and language, as well as matter. Upon this part of the ſubject things have been ſaid, and the controverſy taken up on different footings. We have one adverſary to religion, Lord Shafteſbury, who has been at much pains to vilify the Scriptures on the ſubject of ſtyle and compoſition, and to pretend, that if it were the work of inſpired writers, it would be evidently, in its manner, ſuperior to every human production. In anſwer to this pretence, there was a book written, Blackwall's Sacred Claſſics, comparing the Scriptures with the ancient writers, and ſhewing that there is not any blemiſh in writing to be found in the Scriptures, but may be juſtified by ſimilar expreſſions in the moſt approved claſſics, and that there is no beauty in the claſſic authors, in which they are not outdone by the ſacred penmen. This book, I think, is well worth reading by every ſcholar or divine. Dr Warburton has been pleaſed to

condemn this way of juſtifying the Scriptures, and even to affirm, that taſte is a thing ſo local and variable, that it was a thing impoſſible to have any book deſigned for all mankind, to anſwer ſuch an idea as Lord Shafteſbury ſeems to have formed; nay, he ſeems to deny that there is any ſuch thing in nature as a permanent ſtandard of taſte and propriety in writing, but that there is one manner for the Oriental, and another for the Weſtern writers, and that ſuch have their excellencies, and no compariſon can take place between them. I would not chuſe to join wholly with either of theſe. It is, I think, plain, that it was not the deſign of the Scriptures to be a ſtandard for eloquence, nor does it appear any way connected with the end of revealing divine truth; on the contrary, it ſeems to be the purpoſe of God, to bring us from glorying in human excellence. On the other hand, as I am perſuaded there is a permanent ſtandard of propriety and taſte, ſo I am fully convinced, there are many examples of ſublimity and majeſty in the Scriptures, ſuperior to any uninſpired writings whatſoever.

2. The next thing to be obſerved of the doctrine is its purity; that is to ſay, having an evident tendency to promote holineſs in all who believe and embrace it. That this is the deſign and tendency of the Chriſtian doctrine, is very plain. It is its expreſs purpoſe, to ſet ſin and immorality in the moſt odious light, and not barely to recommend, but to ſhew the abſolute neceſſity of holineſs, in all manner of converſation. It is pretended by ſome infidel writers, that gravity and apparent ſanctity is

the eſſence of impoſtors, and that all impoſtors do deliver a ſyſtem of good morals. But there is not only an excellence in the Chriſtian morals, but a manifeſt ſuperiority in them, to thoſe which are derived from any other ſource, and that in three reſpects: 1. That they are free from mixture, not only many things good, but nothing of a contrary kind. 2. That there are precepts in the Chriſtian morality, and thoſe of the moſt excellent kind, very little, if any thing reſembling which, is to be found in uninſpired moraliſts. The love of God; humility of mind; the forgiveneſs of injuries; and the love of our enemies. The love of God may be inferred conſequentially, from many of the heathen writers; but it is no where ſtated with that propriety and fulneſs as the firſt obligation on the creature, as it is in the ſacred Scriptures. Humility of mind, as repreſented in the goſpel, is wholly peculiar to it. It is obſerved by ſome, that there is no word, neither in the Greek nor Latin languages, to ſignify it. *Humilitas* in Latin, from whence the Engliſh is derived, has a different meaning, and ſignifies *low* and *baſe*. *Manſuetudo animi* in Latin, and Πραότης in Greek, are the neareſt to it, but are far from being that; even the forgiveneſs of injuries, and the love of our enemies, are rather contrary to the heathen virtue; and modern infidels have expreſsly pretended that the Chriſtian religion, by its precepts of humility, and meekneſs, and paſſive ſubmiſſion to injury, has baniſhed that heroiſm and magnanimity which gives ſuch an air of dignity to the hiſtories of Greece and Rome. The third particular in which the Chriſtian morals exceed all

others, is the excellence of the principle from which they ought to flow. The law of God is not contracted into governing the outward conduct, but reaches to the very heart, and requires further, that our obedience ſhould flow, not principally from a regard to our own happineſs, far leſs to our own honour, but from a principle of ſubjection in the creature to the Creator, and a ſingle eye to the glory of God.

3. The excellence of the Scripture doctrine appears from its efficacy. By this I mean the power it hath over the mind, and its actual influence in producing that holineſs it recommends. There are ſeveral things that deſerve conſideration on the efficacy of the Scripture doctrine. 1. It contains the greateſt and moſt powerful motives to duty, and the fitteſt to work on our hopes and fears. Theſe, I confeſs, are much the ſame in general that always have been propoſed as inducements to a moral conduct, yet they are opened with a fulneſs and force in the Scripture, no where elſe to be found. Eternity there makes a very awful appearance; particularly with reſpect to the goſpel and the New Teſtament diſcoveries, we are told that life and immortality are brought to light by them. 2. It carries the greateſt authority with it. The principles of duty are more clearly and fully enforced by the proper authority than any where elſe: the right of God, from creation, to the obedience and ſubmiſſion of his creatures; his additional title from continual beneficence; to which ought to be added, by Chriſtians, the right acquired by redemption; to all which is further to be added, the divine nature it-

ſelf, as our pattern. 3. The effectual aſſiſtance provided in the Scripture doctrine, to deliver us from the bondage of corruption, and bring us to the glorious liberty of the children of God. This is of more conſequence than is commonly apprehended: deſpair of ſucceſs breaks the powers of the mind, and takes away at once the will to attempt, and the power to perform, whereas effectual aid has juſt the oppoſite effect. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, taking it ſingly in this view, is moſt happily calculated to animate men to diligence, and inſpire them with courage and reſolution, and ſeems generally to ſhew the efficacy of the Chriſtian doctrine.

4. Another excellence of the Chriſtian doctrine is plainneſs; it is level to all capacities, well fitted for all ranks, rich and poor, wiſe and unwiſe. It is given as one of the marks of the Meſſiah's coming, and is one of the glories of the goſpel, that it is preached to the poor. Religion was plainly deſigned for all mankind; their intereſt in it is the ſame, therefore it muſt be plain and ſimple; whatever is otherwiſe, whatever ſyſtem is built upon abſtract reaſoning, and is evidently above the comprehenſion of the vulgar, is, for that very reaſon, unfit for their ſervice, and carries a mark of falſehood upon itſelf. There is even ſomething more in the ſimplicity of the goſpel, than barely the plainneſs of its truths and duties. It is from firſt to laſt founded upon facts ſtill plainer. A great part of the inſpired writings is hiſtory: the Old Teſtament is founded upon the fall of man, and is filled up with the hiſtory of Providence, or God's conduct to his choſen people; and the New Teſtament contains the birth,

life, and death, the resurrection and ascension of Christ. So material a part of the doctrine do these things comprise, that the character of the apostles is just that of being witnesses of Christ's resurrection. 5. The last excellence to be taken notice of in the Christian doctrine, is its consistency. This consistency may be viewed to advantage in two different lights: first, its consistency with itself. It is remarkable that the Christian revelation is not a single system that was, or might be supposed to be the occasional production of one man. It extends from the creation, downwards to the present moment, or rather, taking in the prophecies, to the last day and consummation of all things. It consists of several different revelations, and, particularly, two grand different dispensations of providence and grace. The one of these is perfectly consistent with, and suited to the other. It is not easy to suppose an impostor either willing to perform, or able to execute any thing of that kind. But when we consider the creation, and the fall of the Old Testament dispensation, and the prophets of the different and distant ages, conspiring to forward one great design, and the appearance of the long promised Saviour at the fulness of time so exactly corresponding to it, it takes away the possibility of a concert, and therefore the suspicions of an imposture. It is also consistent with the actual state of the world, in which we find two things very remarkable. 1. A great depravity and wickedness. Men may speak and write what they please, upon the beauty, excellence, and dignity of human nature, taking their ideas from the dictates of conscience, as to what we

ought to be. But it is beyond all controverſy, that if we take mankind from the faithful records of hiſtory, and examine what they have been, we ſhall have no great reaſon to admire the beauty of the picture. What is the fame of the greateſt heroes of antiquity? Is it not that either of conquerors or lawgivers? Conquerors give clear teſtimony to the wickedneſs of man, by filling the earth with blood, and ſhewing us what havock has been made, in all ages, of man by man. And what is it that lawgivers have done, but diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the beſt means of repelling violence, and reſtraining the ungoverned luſts and appetites of men. Now the Chriſtian religion is the only one that gives a clear and conſiſtent account of human depravity, and traces it to its very original ſource. This conſiſtency of the doctrines of religion with the actual ſtate of the world, and preſent condition of the nature of man, is very convincing in the way of collateral or preſumptive proof. The other particular remarkable in the ſtate of the world is, the univerſal prevalence of the offering of ſacrifices; a thing found among all nations, and which continued till the coming of Chriſt. Theſe ſacrifices were a confeſſion of guilt, for they were always conſidered as an expiation. But beſides this, it does not appear how they could have occurred, even in that view, unleſs they had been at firſt a matter of revelation, and handed down to mankind by tradition, and carried with them in their diſperſion over the whole world. It does not appear how any body could have imagined, that taking away the life of a beaſt ſhould be any atonement for the ſin of a man; much leſs does

it appear, how every body ſhould have agreed in imagining that ſame thing. But if you take it in conjunction with the truths of the goſpel, its agreement appears manifeſt, and its univerſal prevalence is eaſily accounted for. Theſe ſacrifices were inſtituted and ordained of God, as typical of the great propitiatory ſacrifice to be offered in the fulneſs of time by Chriſt upon the croſs.

## LECTURE V.

II. WE proceed now to the ſecond branch of this head, to conſider the preſumptive proof of the truth of the Chriſtian religion, ariſing from the Perſon who is the Founder of it. He is indeed not only the Founder of it, but the Subject of it; for the whole may be ſaid to relate to his perſon and undertaking. For order ſake, let us here conſider ſeparately—1. His character. 2. His ſituation and hopes. 3. The ſpirit of his religion. 4. The meaſures he took to promote it.

1. His character. This, as painted in the goſpels, in their ſimple, unaffected, and therefore probably genuine narratives, is truly admirable—the moſt meek and gentle, the moſt tender-hearted, the moſt truly benevolent, and active without oſtentation, and the whole crowned and illuſtrated by fortitude and patience, and the moſt unconditional ſubjection to divine Providence. It is unneceſſary to go through, at length, the various excellencies that adorned the man Chriſt Jeſus. Thoſe who are acquainted with the goſpel hiſtory, will ſee the beauty

and propriety of the apoſtle John's expreſſion, 1ſt chapter of his goſpel, and 14th verſe, "And the Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us." It is not improper to adduce here the evangeliſts' authorities, becauſe they were his diſciples, and may be ſuppoſed intereſted parties; for they are the only witneſſes from whom we can expect a teſtimony upon this ſubject. And conſidering them as employed in giving a full account of his character and life, however they might be ſuppoſed to diſguiſe or add, they could not wholly conceal a character fundamentally wrong; and as there are more of them than one, it would have been impoſſible for them to have avoided inconſiſtencies and claſhing, if they had not kept to the truth in point of fact, at leaſt, if not of character; and indeed their whole hiſtories are facts without any laboured encomiums, which carry the cleareſt internal marks of ſincerity of any hiſtories extant among men.

There ſeems not only no deſign to embelliſh their Maſter's character, but none to conceal the defects of their own. It is from the partizans of Mohammed only, and what they have recited of his hiſtory, including his own writings, that we learn his avarice, pride, and luſt. Add to this, that indifferent writers among the heathens have ſpoken to the praiſe of Jeſus. I am ſenſible, however, and think it beſt to inform you, that ſeveral of the writings taken notice of by ſome of the ancient fathers, are probably ſpurious, as the letters from Agbarus, king of Edeſſa, to Chriſt, and the letter in anſwer to it from Chriſt to him. Euſebius tells the ſtory of Agbarus having heard of Chriſt's fame, and ſend-

ing to him to come and cure him. Euſebius in this caſe ſeems really to have given credit to it, on the memorials preſented to him by the church of Edeſſa. But the language given to Agbarus is too like that of a Chriſtian, and the anſwer of Jeſus Chriſt is miſquoting, as well as miſinterpreting Scripture. See Dupin's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. The letters ſaid to be from the Virgin Mary, are evident forgeries of a late date. The letter ſaid to be from Pilate to Tiberius, is not ſo univerſally acknowledged to be falſe. Biſhop Pearſon has largely and learnedly defended it, and it is very poſſible there might be ſome account ſent from Pilate to Rome at the time of Chriſt's crucifixion, even though the letter now to be ſeen ſhould not be genuine. There is alſo a paſſage of Joſephus, and in all the manuſcripts of that author, very favourable to the character of Chriſt. However, without going further into theſe, the very ſilence of Joſephus, who is known to have been an enemy to the Chriſtian faith, is an evidence that he had nothing to object againſt the character of Chriſt, as he certainly would have done it willingly, and in the hiſtory of the Jews had ſo fair an opportunity. The character, then, of Chriſt, was not only blameleſs but amiable. This is certainly a conſiderable preſumption in his favour. His credentials deſerve to be conſidered with care, and his pretenſions to be weighed with impartiality; nor ought it to be forgotten here, that his own ſincerity was proven in the moſt unqueſtionable manner. He ſealed his teſtimony with his blood. That he was tried, condemned, and crucified for his pretenſions, is abſo-

lutely certain. This is one of the moſt important facts in the hiſtory of the goſpel, and it does not admit of any doubt, for his enemies reproach him with it, and his friends affirm and glory in it. We may depend upon it, therefore, that he was ſincere. He would never forfeit all that could be dear on earth, and ſuffer an ignominious death, for what he knew to be falſe.

2. Let us next conſider his ſituation and hopes. In any great and hazardous undertaking, eſpecially in an impoſture, there muſt be ſome poſſible or probable way of accounting for the motives of the deceiver. In this caſe there is nothing that can lead us to ſuppoſe, or that can well admit the ſuppoſition, of his contriving a cunningly deviſed fable. He was of that rank in life which could not readily inſpire that reſolution; he was of that ſort of education that could not fit him for carrying it into practice, or give the leaſt probable hopes of ſucceſs, if he ſhould attempt it. When his enemies, as they all did at firſt, called him the carpenter, and the carpenter's ſon, they did not obſerve the force of that, when impartially conſidered. One of no higher capacity and inſtruction, could neither be ſuppoſed fit to conceive or execute ſo noble a deſign. Could he, ſuppoſing him a mere man, in that ſphere of life, have the leaſt expectation of prevailing over the power and wiſdom of the world combined againſt him? Whoever weighs this with impartiality, will find it very ſatisfying and convincing to the mind.

3. It receives, however, great additional force from the next particular, viz. the ſpirit of his religion, and that ſcheme of doctrine and ſyſtem of duty

which he promulgated and supported. It was directly opposed, in the first place, to the prejudices of the Jews. Could we even suppose, which is otherwise so difficult, that all the preparatory dispensations, and the whole concordant succession of Jewish prophets, and the general persuasion of the Jews and the eastern part of the world (testified by the heathen historians) that a great prince was to come from that country, and lay the foundation of a lasting dominion, happened by chance. Could we next suppose, that a cunning impostor, finding things in this situation, was willing to take the advantage of it, and pass himself upon the world for the expected prince; he would no doubt have formed his plan upon the views which the Jews had, and must have founded his hope of success entirely upon this circumstance. They expected a temporal prince, and he came an humble teacher, and suffering Saviour. By this means he had not only the dispositions of the corrupt, but the prejudices of the best part of his countrymen to oppose. What a strange scheme of human contrivance! He had no reason to think he could convince men, and he taught that it was unlawful to force them. This reasoning is supported by experience. In fact, during the period from Christ's death to the destruction of Jerusalem, there were many impostors who made their appearance, and they every one took the measures I have described above. The Jews expected a mighty conqueror, and they always appeared at the head of a band of fighting men. Every impostor would act the same part in a similar case. Again, as his plan was opposed to the prejudices of the Jews, so indeed

it was oppoſed to the prejudices of human nature. The croſs of Chriſt was fooliſhneſs to the Greeks, as well as a ſtumbling-block to the Jews. The humility and ſelf-denial of the goſpel, and the precepts of paſſive ſubmiſſion, as well as the diſtinct account our Saviour gives to his diſciples, of the oppoſition and ſuffering they muſt expect, had nothing in them alluring to the world in general, and did not ſeem at all calculated to draw away diſciples after him. When I ſay this, I am very ſenſible that moral precepts, in ſome degree, muſt ſanctify even an impoſture itſelf. If any man were to pretend a divine miſſion, and teach groſs immorality, he would be deſpiſed and diſbelieved, even by immoral men. But a contrived religion, that the contriver wiſhes to ſucceed, muſt be accommodated to human taſte. Whereas, like the religion of Chriſt, true religion has been, is, and always will be contrary to the ſpirit of the world. I ſhall juſt add, that the Founder of the Chriſtian faith did not contrive his religion, ſuppoſing it ever ſo ſucceſsful, in ſuch a way as to bring honour or profit to himſelf, or thoſe who ſhould be afterwards concerned in the adminiſtration of it. Inſtead of preaching up form and ceremony, ſtately temples, and coſtly ſacrifies, he preached them down, and ſhewed that they were vain when conſidered in themſelves, and only valuable as types and ſhadows; ſo that they were to ceaſe after his appearance. Inſtead of exalting his prieſts and miniſters, he makes them ſervants of all. This reflection upon pure religion and undefiled, as delivered by our Saviour himſelf, will appear to have great force if you conſider, that it is from this

very quarter that all the corruptions of Chriſtianity in the following ages took their riſe; they proceeded from that love of pomp and power, and the influence of that worldly ſpirit which he took ſo much pains to reſtrain.

4. Let us conſider what meaſures he fell upon to procure a favourable reception to his doctrine. He called and employed twelve poor illiterate fiſhermen, no way qualified for ſuch an undertaking.

On this part of the ſubject it has been often ſhewn, with great force of reaſon, that if the goſpel were a fable, the apoſtles, who bore ſo great a part in its firſt publication, muſt have been impoſtors or enthuſiaſts, deceivers or deceived. Both theſe points have been laboured by ſeveral eminent writers, and it has been ſhewn, that they could not be either the one or the other. Not deceivers, becauſe they had not the leaſt temptation to it. There was not only nothing to gain by it, but they were obliged to ſuffer the loſs of all things for their adherence to the Saviour. Poverty they muſt and did ſuffer during his life-time; and though, during a great part of his perſonal miniſtry, they had the favour of the people, yet about the time, and ever after his crucifixion, when the apoſtles came to appear upon the ſcene, continual reproach and univerſal ſcorn was their portion. The truth is, they ſeem to have been forced into the ſervice, for a mixture of fear and unbelief made them all forſake him and fly, when he came to his laſt conflict. Neither could they be enthuſiaſts, and themſelves under the power of deluſion, for many reaſons. Their Maſter was well

known to them, living with them in a ſtate of the moſt intimate familiarity. It was not to a ſingle fact that they bore teſtimony, but to a whole character and life. His miracles alſo were all plain and public, and of ſuch a nature as that the deceit muſt have been eaſily perceived. But there is another circumſtance more powerful than any other; he profeſſed to endow theſe his diſciples with a power of working miracles themſelves. Now certainly in this they could not be deceived. A man may, by great ſlight and addreſs, make me believe he does a thing that he cannot do; but to make me believe that I myſelf, through my whole life, and at a diſtance from him, and even after his death, can, and do perform many things, which yet I do not, is plainly more than improbable, it is literally impoſſible. So juſt are theſe remarks, that in fact even the diſciples of Chriſt themſelves, appear ſo far from having laid any ſcheme of deluſion, that they appear plainly at firſt to have been under the ſame prejudices with the reſt of the Jews. They ſeem evidently to have expected him to appear as a temporal prince and conqueror; and probably their hopes of honour and offices in the kingdom which he was to eſtabliſh, contributed at firſt, in part, to their yielding to the evidence of his divine power. This ſeems to have been the import of the requeſt of the mother of James and John, "Lord, grant that theſe my two ſons may ſit," &c. as alſo it ſeems to have been the meaning of this queſtion put to him by his diſciples in general, Acts i. 6. "Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the kingdom to Iſrael?" If this was the caſe, can any perſon believe

they were deceived? Would not the disappointment of their carnal expectations have provoked them to forsake him, if they had not been brought under the power of inward conviction from what they saw and heard?

It is proper to remark here upon the measures he took to procure reception to his doctrine, that he framed his religion totally different in kind, and in principle, from all the heathen religions.

They differed from one another in the objects of their worship, and in their several rites, but they were all supposed to be consistent. There were in different countries, and even cities, different gods, and different ways of worship; perhaps also different families had various household gods in one city, but they were not supposed to be destructive of each other's divinity; so that it was easy to introduce the worship of a deity into any place in which it had not been before. It was remarked of Athens by an ancient writer, because of its readiness to adopt the worship of every divinity, that it was hospitable to the gods. But Christ, on the contrary, in his religion equally opposed them all, declaring that the gods made with hands which the Gentiles worshipped, were no gods. This was highly consonant to reason, because no lie is of the truth; yet it would have been highly impolitic in an impostor, and indeed would not readily have occurred to an impostor. It is remarkable that Lord Shaftesbury has attacked the Christian religion on this very head: he commends the heathen religion as of a sociable nature, whereas the Christian is abhorrent from all others. This shews how much the greatest men

may be made ſilly by prejudices; for nothing can be plainer, than that whatever is according to truth, muſt be oppoſite to every falſehood. When we put all theſe things together, with the enlargements of which they are capable, and which will probably occur to moſt of you in hearing, they ſeem to take away all poſſibility of ſuppoſing the goſpel to be the product of an impoſtor.

3. The third general head of preſumptive evidence, contains the circumſtances attending the publication of the goſpel. Many of theſe are worthy of obſervation, and we ſhall find that, taking them ſingly or collectively, they are in general ſuch as, ſuppoſing the goſpel to be true, greatly illuſtrate the wiſdom of God in the choice of them; but on the other ſuppoſition, they were the moſt unfavourable for procuring a reception, and cauſing ſucceſs to an impoſtor. The time of Chriſt's appearance is called in Scripture, the fulneſs of time. This indeed may be underſtood as only meaning the appointed time—that which had been fixed by the ancient prophecies. There are, however, many other reſpects, in which it may be called the fulneſs of time. The ignorance and wickedneſs of the world had come to a full height. The remains of tradition for many ages continued to have ſome effect, but were by this time wholly obliterated by the inventions of men.

There had alſo been full time to try every other method of reformation, ſo that the intervention of divine providence, according to the teſtimony of ſeveral heathen writers, was become neceſſary. Whoever will look into the reaſoning of Cicero, "De

natura Deorum," and his other moral or theological diſputations, will have a very clear and full conviction, how much men of the fineſt genius and greateſt penetration, were bewildered upon the ſubject of religion. This very thing, indeed, has been recommended by ſome judicious perſons for a man to ſatisfy himſelf of the neceſſity of revelation in general; and if this is fully done, the acceptance of the Chriſtian religion follows as a ſpeedy conſequence.

We may alſo take notice, that the world in general, at the time of Chriſt's appearance, was fitted in a manner it never had been before, for ſpreading the knowledge of the truth with the greateſt facility and ſpeed. The Roman empire, which had riſen gradually, was then extended in a manner over the whole known world. Before that time, the immenſe number of ſmall, independent, and commonly hoſtile ſtates, rendered mutual acceſs and intercourſe far more difficult. It is true, before this the Aſſyrian and Perſian monarchies were of conſiderable extent, but neither comparable to this, nor of any long duration. But now the nations being united under one head, it was eaſy to carry the tidings of ſalvation to the moſt diſtant corners. Add to this the favourable circumſtance, that there was peace over all the world at the time of Chriſt's birth; a fit emblem of his character who was the Prince of Peace. It was alſo deſigned for another purpoſe, that there might be eaſy acceſs and opportunity to the apoſtles to fufil their commiſſion, Mark xvi. 15. "Go ye into all the world," &c. The event fully correſponded to this preparation for it in providence; for it is incredible to think with what ra-

pidity the apoſtles carried the name of Chriſt through the world, and how early the goſpel was preached to the moſt-diſtant nations. It is alſo obſervable, that when this purpoſe had been ſerved by it, the power and greatneſs of the Romans came to an end. As ſoon as the church was planted in different corners of the Roman empire, that vaſt body, which had long been growing to ſuch an enormous bulk, was firſt rent into two parts, and then broken into innumerable ſmaller diviſions. Take it therefore as a great deſign of Providence—the time and circumſtances appear admirably to illuſtrate it. But, on the other hand, what probability could there be, that a handful of illiterate mechanics ſhould be able to overthrow the whole ſyſtem of heathen theology, that had continued ſo long and ſpread ſo wide; that they ſhould think of doing this, in oppoſition to the power of princes, the learning of philoſophers, the intereſted policy of prieſts, and the rage and enthuſiaſm of a deluded people! Strange, indeed, that theſe ſucceſsful agents ſhould come even from an obſcure corner, and from a nation that was, of all others, not merely deſpiſed, but execrated and abhorred; that they ſhould, notwithſtanding, ſucceed by preaching the divinity of a crucified man, a fact that carried in it the higheſt idea of baſeneſs and ignominy. Finally, that they ſhould do this without the parade or form of worſhip to engage attention; without ſecrets or myſteries to excite veneration; but by the ſimplicity of that truth which the worldly man deſpiſes, and the ſtrictneſs of that law which the ſinner hates.

## LECTURE VI.

WE now come to the principal and direct evidence for the truth of the Chriſtian religion. This is of ſuch a nature as to be in itſelf full and concluſive; ſo that if the facts alluded to be true, the conſequence is neceſſary and unavoidable. Preſumptive evidence is ſometimes of ſuch a nature, and carried ſo far by the concurrence of circumſtances, as to produce even a clear and full conviction; yet it differs in its kind from the direct concluſive proof. A few circumſtances of probability do but little, they gradually riſe in ſtrength by an addition to their number; but a direct proof, though ſingle, if juſt, ſatisfies the mind. In this view, the proof of the truth of the Chriſtian religion is the working of miracles. A ſupernatural power is the ſeal or ſanction of a ſupernatural commiſſion. Perhaps, however, as the Chriſtian religion is the completion of one great ſyſtem, which began to take place from the very fall of man, was gradually opened in ſucceeding ages, and perfected by the incarnation of the Son of God, we may divide even this ſingle proof into two parts, the one conſiſting of the fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and the other of the miracles performed by our Lord in the days of his fleſh. Theſe ultimately reſt upon the ſame principle, for the foreſeeing and the foretelling of events future and diſtant, is as real a miracle, and perhaps as fully ſatisfying to the mind, as any other whatever. But before entering upon theſe two

ſeparate branches, it will be beſt to begin with what is common to both, and conſider, 1. What is a miracle. 2. What is its proper import in confirmation of a doctrine, and the force of the proof.

I. Then, let us conſider the queſtion, What is a miracle? Some ſay it is a reverſing, altering, or ſuſpending the courſe of nature, or its ordinary or general laws. Some ſay it is doing what is above the power of a creature or a finite being. And ſome, that it is doing what is demonſtrably above the power of the immediate agent. As to the firſt of theſe I would obſerve, that reverſing, altering, or ſuſpending the courſe of nature, is certainly a miracle; but the definition is not ſufficiently comprehenſive, becauſe every miracle is not of that kind. The predicting the recovery of a perſon in ſickneſs with ſpecial circumſtances, as in the caſe of Hezekiah, or diſcovering a knowledge of things diſtant, as in the caſe of what our Saviour ſaid to Nathanael, are as clearly and evidently miracles, as any dominion over nature; beſides, it is not always in our power to ſay, whether there is any controul or alteration of the laws of nature or not, as when our Saviour ſpoke to the winds and the ſea, and immediately there was a great calm. A ſudden calm might have happened in the courſe of things, and yet its following at that inſtant carried ſuch a conviction with it, that the beholders immediately and juſtly ſaid, "Behold what manner of man is this," &c.

Againſt miracles, under this view of controuling the courſe of nature, Lord Shafteſbury, with his uſual vivacity, and, at the ſame time, with his uſual prejudice and partiality, has objected thus: "Strange,"

ſays he, "to make the altering the courſe of nature a mark of the Divinity, when this is not ſo convincing and ſatisfying a proof of the being and perfections of God, as the order and regularity of the courſe of nature." But nothing can be more equivocal, and indeed diſingenuous, than this manner of ſpeaking; for as the firſt conſtitution and conſtant preſervation of the frame of nature, is a proof of the wiſdom and power of its Maker, ſo an expreſs viſible interpoſition in his own work, at his own time, and for his own great purpoſes, is certainly a moſt convincing proof of his power and preſence. I ſhew my power in my family, by altering, as well as giving my commands; and my property in my ground, by cutting down a tree, when I have uſe for it in other ſervice, as well as by planting it, or pruning it.

The ſecond definition of a miracle is, that it is doing what is above the power of any finite being, and therefore ſhews itſelf to be the finger of God. This, though very often adopted by writers, I think is liable to great exceptions. We certainly can hardly be thought capable of defining what is above the power of the finite creature, and what not. Creation is juſtly reckoned an incommunicable power, though this is only a conſequence from revelation, and particularly from worſhip being founded upon creation, and from this circumſtance joined with it, that God will not give his glory to another; but what powers God may communicate to creatures, other than this, we cannot ſay, ſuch as knowing the thoughts—perceiving things at a di-

ſtance—making a man to do ſo by private intimation or expreſſion—controuling the elements—and many others that might be mentioned; therefore, I apprehend, it is the third that we muſt reſt upon as the true and genuine definition of a miracle, &c. when it is evidently above the natural power of the viſible agent, the perſon at whoſe command, at whoſe deſire, or in atteſtation of whoſe claim, it is wrought. This is the point upon which we can moſt eaſily ſatisfy ourſelves; and it is as ſure an evidence of divine authority, as if we could certainly tell whether the thing produced could, or could not be effected by a finite power. It was from this that the Jews concluded, that our Saviour had the preſence and aſſiſtance of God: "For no man can do the miracles that thou doſt, except God be with him."

We are now to conſider what is the import of a miracle, and of its effect in confirmation of a doctrine. Prodigies and wonderful things properly prove nothing at all, except when they are profeſſedly wrought in atteſtation of ſome truth, or of ſome claim of the perſon who does them. They reſt upon this ſuppoſition, that ſuch a power is an evidence of a divine commiſſion, and they are naturally expected as the credentials of thoſe who pretend a divine commiſſion. The Jews, you ſee, made the demand of our Saviour, John vi. 30. "What ſign ſheweſt thou," &c. and though he ſometimes refuſed to gratify their malicious petulance or obſtinate incredulity, yet in general he appealed to his works, as the juſt and proper teſtimonies of his divine commiſſion, John x. 25. "The

works that I do," &c. John xv. 24. "If I had not done among them," &c. There are some who tell us, that a miracle in attestation of the truth of a doctrine, must be considered as a sanction to it, only if this doctrine is in itself credible, consonant to reason, and worthy of belief. Those who reason in this manner, say, that some doctrines are so contrary or so shocking to reason, that no evidence can be more plain, even when a miracle is wrought, than the evidence of such doctrines being contrary to the nature and perfections of God. But I look upon this manner of reasoning to be very unjust and inconclusive. It tends, in the result, to set the reasonings of men, independent of revelation, above the testimony of God, and revelation itself. This seems to be the darling theme, not only of infidels, but of pretended friends to revealed religion, who are worse, if possible, than infidels themselves. It is easy to see that if this is the case, there can be no benefit received by revelation. Miracles are the only sanction that can be given to a revelation; yet before these will be admitted or suffered to be heard, these reasoners tell us, that we must consider the doctrine itself, whether it is worthy of God; and if they shall be pleased to judge that it is not, the miracles, and any other evidence that can be given, are set at nought as of no value, and the matter not even brought to a trial. This I apprehend to be really the case with many in the present age; but it seems to me very plain, that such is our blindness and ignorance in the things of God, that we know very little about them, till they are made known by God himself; and if we were to make our own reason the previous stan-

dard of what was admiſſible or not in quality of revelation, it would make mad work indeed. I ſhall care very little what men of vain and carnal minds ſay of my ſentiments; but I have been many years of opinion, that as revelation was neceſſary, and revelation is given us, we act the moſt wiſe and truly rational part, if we take all our theological opinions immediately, and without challenge, from the oracles of truth. I confeſs it is agreeable to me to ſhew, that the truths of the everlaſting goſpel are agreeable to ſound reaſon, and founded upon the ſtate of human nature; and I have made it my buſineſs, through my whole life, to illuſtrate this remark. Yet to begin by making the ſuggeſtion of our own reaſon the ſtandard of what is to be heard or examined as a matter of revelation, I look upon to be highly dangerous, manifeſtly unjuſt, and inconſiſtent with the foundation-ſtone of all revealed religion, viz. that reaſon, without it, is inſufficient to bring us to the knowledge of God and our duty; and therefore, as Socrates ſaid to Alcibiades, "It is reaſonable to think that God will come down into the world, to teach us his will." I am not inſenſible how far it would be juſt to carry the principle on which our adverſaries ground their ſentiments. Any new principles or doctrines, ſeemingly abſurd in themſelves, and unholy in their effects, would not, with judicious perſons, be raſhly or ſuddenly admitted; and the more ſuſpicious the principles are in themſelves, no doubt we muſt examine the pretenſions to miracles the more carefully. This is the part of prudence; but to carry it further, and ſay, we will receive no evidence that God has taught

any thing different from what we ourſelves think reaſonable, is juſt weakening the truth before admitted, that revelation immediately from himſelf is evidently neceſſary.

It will be ſaid by ſome, that ſometimes pretenſions not only to revelation, but to miracles, are contradictory, and deſtructive of each other. I admit there may be ſuch a ſuppoſition made, but I look upon it as a neceſſary conſequence of the wiſdom of the divine government, that he will not ſuffer any of theſe things to be, without ſufficient marks whereby an impartial inquirer may diſcover the difference. This was the caſe of Moſes and the magicians in Egypt; they were ſuffered to perform many things ſimilar to his miracles, but ſtill the great ſuperiority was to be ſeen in his; and perhaps by the compariſons made between them and the other, there was the more evident demonſtration of the finger of God. On this whole ſubject, and particularly the import of miracles as the proof of a doctrine, ſee Biſhop Fleetwood's works. Theſe two preliminary points being diſcuſſed, what remains may be ſtated with the greater brevity, and to the greater advantage. The miracles in behalf of the truth of the goſpel may be divided, as hinted above, into two parts: the fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and the miracles during Chriſt's perſonal miniſtry. As to the firſt of theſe, nothing is more plain than the faith of believers being pointed, from the earlieſt ages, to a Saviour to come. From the firſt promiſe, that the ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head, through

all the after discoveries of the divine will, this was manifest, and indeed more and more manifest, as it drew nearer to the fulness of time. Their foreknowledge and foretelling of future events, is one of the most satisfying kind of miracles, and least liable to deceit. Christ was therefore the promised seed, the desire of all nations, the hope of Israel, the prophet that should come into the world. That he appeared at the time fixed in the ancient prophecies; that he answered all the characters or descriptions of the ancient prophets; that he did this in a way so peculiar, that he plainly fulfilled them, although not in the way the mistakes of the latter Jews made them expect from him, is clearly apparent; and as I have stated, under the head of presumptive proof, their having departed from the genuine spirit of the promises, and his appearing in a way contrary to their expectations, only seems to destroy every suspicion of fraud and imposture. Imposture could not have been continued and handed down through so many ages. Nothing like this is to be seen, or has ever been heard of in the history of mankind, and therefore Christ, as the Messias of the Jews, must give the most favourable reception to him as the Saviour of the world *. Here, too, we might particularly consider the miracles Christ performed in the days of his flesh. Them he appealed to as the evidences of his divine mission. But after the remarks that have been made above, on the subject absolutely considered, it will not be necessary to extend this part of it. I only remark that his miracles were upon the plainest subjects—the winds,

* See Redder's Demonstration of the Messias.

healing the ſick, feeding the multitude, raiſing the dead. The Phariſees fooliſhly aſked a ſign from heaven. It had been much eaſier to have dazzled their eyes with the appearance of ſome extraordinary meteor in the airy regions, than to have given them the proofs which he actually did. I do not ſtay to illuſtrate the tender and benevolent ſubject of many of his miracles.

## LECTURE VII.

WE now proceed to the conſequential proofs of the truth of the Chriſtian religion; that is to ſay, the circumſtances that have ariſen ſince the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, and his crucifixion on Mount Calvary. Theſe I ſhall divide into the following branches: 1. Its incredible progreſs by the moſt unlikely means, great extent, and long continuance. 2. The great and valuable effects produced by it. 3. The viſible fulfilment of ſcripture prophecies.

I. Let us conſider its incredible progreſs. Immediately after Chriſt's aſcenſion, his diſciples went into different parts of the world, and ſpread the truth with a ſucceſs altogether aſtoniſhing. It is agreed, I believe, that in leſs than fifty years the goſpel was preached and embraced throughout the vaſt extent of the Roman empire. This argument does not appear in its full force, unleſs we conſider by what means the effect was produced. The apparent inſtruments were only a few fiſhermen of Galilee, without either power or learning. One

would think it quite incredible that any of them ſhould ever think of forming the deſign, ſtill more ſo, that they ſhould agree in it; for they were many and without a head; and that, though agreed, they ſhould carry it into execution. That Minos in Crete, and Numa at Rome, profeſſed lawgivers and heads of their petty inconſiderable tribes, ſhould pretend intercourſe with the gods, and procure reverence for their decrees, or that they ſhould ſucceed in their little dominions for a very ſhort time, is not wonderful. But that ſuch perſons as Matthew the publican, and his companions, ſhould form a deſign of ſubverting the whole of the old religion, and introducing the new, and ſucceed in it, is altogether aſtoniſhing. The wonder increaſes when we conſider, that theſe men were not united under any ſyſtem of government among themſelves, further than their principles of obedience to their Maſter, who had left the world. There was not any of them who claimed, or poſſeſſed ſuperiority over the reſt. They were ſeparated from one another, without any proſpect of ever meeting again on earth. Yet that they ſhould agree in their doctrine, and propagate one religion, and that their ſeparate writings ſhould be the harmonious and concordant ſum and ſtandard of that religion, is not to be accounted for without the power and influence of that Providence which is over all the earth. It is not to be omitted here, that they obtained this ſucceſs by preaching the divinity of a man who had been crucified, the moſt odious and contemptible idea that could be preſented to the human mind. One would have thought, that as ſoon as Chriſt was crucified,

it would at once have put an end to all further reſpect and attention to him. This, it is moſt likely, his enemies, the high prieſts and Phariſees, thought themſelves quite certain of, which made them ſo intent upon his crucifixion. I cannot help obſerving, that ſome judicious commentators have imagined that the devil, the great enemy of mankind, ſuppoſed the ſame thing. He, though acquainted in general with the end of the Saviour's miſſion, yet certainly was not acquainted with every part of the deſign of infinite wiſdom, and thought, if he prevailed to have Chriſt rejected by the Jews, judged, condemned, and crucified by the Romans, he ſhould entirely defeat the deſign. They ſuppoſe this to be the meaning of his triumphing over principalities and powers, making a ſhew of them on his croſs, and by death deſtroying him that had the power of death, that is the devil. I muſt further obſerve, that the whole doctrine of Chriſt is moſt directly oppoſed to human pride; ſo much ſo indeed, that after it is embraced, and there is a general profeſſion of it in any place, a worldly ſpirit is never at eaſe endeavouring to corrupt and alter it. I ſhall add but one circumſtance more. The goſpel was then ſucceſsful, notwithſtanding the greateſt and moſt violent oppoſition made to it from every quarter. The heathen religions, as obſerved formerly, were not ſuppoſed to be mutually repugnant, and did not contend with one another; but they all contended with the goſpel, which was indeed their common enemy. The moſt violent perſecutions were raiſed againſt the Chriſtians, throughout all the Roman empire. The philoſophers and learned men, who

had never contended with the popular religion, all united their force againſt the Chriſtian religion. Yet the divine wiſdom defeated the counſel of the wiſe, and brought to nought the underſtanding of the prudent, that no fleſh might glory in his preſence. I muſt more particularly obſerve, that Julian the apoſtate, who was not only the moſt inveterate, but alſo the moſt wiſe and able enemy that ever ſet himſelf in oppoſition to the Chriſtian faith, tried to aſſault it in every way that could be thought of; he found that cruelty and violence would not do, then he tried reproach and public ſhame. He encouraged the philoſophers by his kindneſs, and aſſiſted them by his writings, and indeed he carried on his oppoſition with ſo much zeal, that he even attempted the reformation of the Pagan religion, by inſiſting on the heathen prieſts imitating the Chriſtians in their mortified carriage, and the charitable care of the poor. But all would not do; and he himſelf, by the circumſtances of his death, proved one of the greateſt means of ſpreading the triumphs of the goſpel. When all theſe circumſtances, with the enlargements of which they are capable, are taken together, the ſucceſs of the goſpel is a very powerful evidence of its divine original, ſo that we may well ſay, as the apoſtle did, "So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed!"

II. The ſecond thing to be conſidered, is the great and valuable effects produced by the goſpel. There is the greater reaſon to inſiſt upon this part of the ſubject, that enemies have ſhewed a great inclination to deny or miſrepreſent them. I am, however, perſuaded, that on a fair and candid examination, the

effects of the gospel will appear to be truly great, and truly extensive. The effects of the gospel may be considered in two views, as producing knowledge and practice. Now, did not the gospel introduce some knowledge in religion? Whoever will compare the system of religious belief which prevailed before, with that which took place after the publication of the gospel, will see the great excellence and virtue of that dispensation. Such was the power of divine light, that it actually in a short time banished the absurd polytheism and idolatry of the heathen nations. So complete was the victory, that it never has again dared to lift up its head. The enemies of religion are not now to be stripped of Venus and Bacchus, and the whole catalogue of those fictitious deities, the worship of whom, while it claimed to be religion, was nothing but a discipline of ignorance, vice, and impurity. The only knowledge of religion which was of value among the ancients, was the remains of tradition from the patriarchal age; and whatever now deserves that name is borrowed from the gospel. It was an early remark of the Christian apologists, that the gospel had put to silence the heathen oracles.

On this head it is particularly remarkable, that the knowledge of religion, which is the fruit of the gospel, is the acquisition of the multitude. There was something of this mentioned formerly in another view. It deserves, however, repeated notice, that the gospel was preached to the poor, and brought light, not to particular men, but to mankind in general. A mechanic or peasant, instructed in the oracles of truth, has now more just and con-

ſiſtent notions of God, his perfections, his laws, his providence, than the moſt renowned philoſophers of ancient times.

It is obſerved by ſome when on this ſubject, that the goſpel has introduced the greateſt improvements of human as well as divine knowledge: not but that thoſe arts which depend entirely upon the exertion of human talents and powers, were carried to as great perfection before, as ſince the coming of Chriſt, in the heathen as in the Chriſtian world, ſuch as poetry, painting, ſtatuary, &c. But natural knowledge, or the knowledge of the conſtitution and courſe of nature, began with, and increaſed by religious light; all the theories of the ancients, as to the formation and preſervation of the earth and heavens, were childiſh and trifling. From revelation we learn the ſimple account of the creation of all things out of nothing, by the omnipotence of God; and perhaps there are few things more delightful than to obſerve, that the lateſt diſcoveries in philoſophy have never ſhewn us any thing but what is perfectly conſiſtent with the Scripture doctrine and hiſtory. There is one modern claſs or ſect of divines, who affirm that all human ſcience is to be found in the Bible—natural philoſophy, aſtronomy, chronology. This, I am afraid, is going too far; but I think it had not been poſſible for any writer or writers in the age of the ſacred penmen, to have written ſo much on the creation of the world, and its hiſtory ſince that, without being guilty of abſurdities and contradictions, unleſs they had been under the direction of an infallible guide.

The next branch of this head is, to conſider the

effects of the gospel as to practice. Here, I think, the first thing is to consider the manifest tendency and professed aim of the gospel itself, and its effects on those who truly believe it, and live according to it. The temper and character of such will appear to be truly admirable, and the more so upon a very strict and critical examination, if we consider the nobleness of their principles, the strictness, regularity, and universality of their practice, the usefulness and happy effects of their conversation. A Christian's heart is possessed by the love of God, and his will subjected to the order of his providence. Moderation and self-denial is his rule with respect to himself, and unfeigned good-will, proved by active beneficence, with regard to others. Nor is this at all matter of mere theory, it is certainly matter of experience; nay, its influence hath been, as it ought to be, powerful in gaining the assent of others to the truth of the doctrine. The visible and eminent piety of the first ministers of the New Testament, and the earliest converts, had the greatest effect in procuring reception to the principle that produced them. The general integrity of their lives, and the eminent appearance in some of them of the illustrious virtues, charity, fortitude and patience, was what subdued all opposition.

The heathens sometimes reproached one another by the comparison, saying, See how these Christians love one another! How honourable was it, when one of the apologists (Lactantius) was able to say, Give me a man who is wrathful, malicious, revengeful, and with a few words of God I will make

him calm as a lamb; give me one that is a covetous, niggardly miſer, and I will give you him again liberal, bountiful, and dealing out of his money by handfuls; give me one that is fearful of pain and of death, and immediately he ſhall deſpiſe racks, and croſſes, and the moſt dreadful puniſhments you can invent.

If we were to make a compariſon between particulars, I apprehend the advantage would appear very juſt; but it is uſual to ſtate the compariſon, not with regard to thoſe that are truly religious, but to take it from the general conduct of thoſe who profeſs the goſpel. I am not ſure that any compariſon is juſt, but between real believers and others. However, we may make it both ways, and ſee how it will turn out. Compare the piety, humility, charity, and active zeal of a real Chriſtian, with the moſt ſtriking characters of ancient times, and the great ſuperiority of the firſt will appear. Not only ſottiſh idolatry, but luſt, pride, oſtentation, will appear to tarniſh many of the laſt in a remarkable degree. But even with regard to mere profeſſion, there is reaſon to ſay, that the manners of men are greatly improved, even where they are not ſanctified.

He who will conſider with attention the manners of ancient nations, will ſee great reaſon to abate of that veneration which his reading their exploits, as recorded by writers of eminence, may ſometimes lead him into. There are perſons to be found of ſuch barbarity, in many inſtances prevailing through a nation, the cuſtom of expoſing their children; and in the caſe of ſome, there was ſuch ferocity and

cruelty, either plundering their enemies, or selling them for slaves, in sacking cities, as would make a person of any humanity shudder in reading them. Rollin's character of the ancient Spartans, and President Goguet's account of the manners in general of the ancient ages, may give some conception of this matter.

## LECTURE VIII.

THE third branch of this head, is the fulfilling of Scripture prophecies. This is an argument very satisfying to the mind, and which might be illustrated by a great variety of examples. The Old Testament prophecies I have had occasion to consider in a former part of the subject, and shall not now resume, further than by making this observation, that there are some prophecies here, which not only had their completion in Christ, but continue to be fulfilled in the present state of the world. Some entertaining peculiarities of this kind may be seen in several writers upon the partition of the earth, and the manner of its being peopled. In Delany's Revelation examined with Candour, there are some things well worthy of the attention of a judicious and critical reader. Take one example; he mentions the prophecy of Ishmael, "His hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." He says that this prophecy is fulfilling at this time as well as formerly; that the posterity of Ishmael, who settled in Arabia, are the

wild Arabs, a people that are in a ſtate of oppoſition to all the neighbouring nations; that they never were ſubdued by any of the different princes that obtained dominion in different ages in thoſe countries, and continue unconnected and unſubdued to this day.

But one of the chiefeſt inſtances we have to take notice of, on the ſubject of Scripture prophecies, is the hiſtory and preſent ſtate of the Jewiſh nation. The deſtruction of the city and temple of Jeruſalem, was propheſied of by our Saviour in a manner ſo diſtinct and ſo particular, that it is not eaſy to imagine any thing to exceed it. With regard to the temple in particular, he ſaid that there ſhould not remain one ſtone upon another that ſhould not be thrown down. He deſcribes the extreme miſery of the people when Jeruſalem ſhould be compaſſed about with armies; and he fixes the time in the moſt preciſe manner, that that generation ſhould not paſs away till all was fulfilled; and, finally, he warns his own diſciples, when certain ſigns appeared, to fly for ſafety. The reality of thoſe prophecies, from the time in which they happened, and the facts with which they were connected, are ſo well eſtabliſhed, as not to be eaſily capable of contradiction. And when we compare the event with them, it is truly aſtoniſhing; as the guilt of that people was very great, ſo the judgments on them were the moſt ſignal, terrible, and laſting, that were ever inflicted on any nation.

Their own hiſtorian (Joſephus) gives ſuch an account of the miſeries of the ſiege, as is painful and ſhocking to read; at the ſame time the contentions

within the walls, and the unrelenting fury with which they were animated one againſt another, makes it impoſſible to conſider them in any other light, than as a blinded and deſerted people. Another circumſtance alſo well worthy of attention is, that as they had crucified the Saviour, and were particularly deſirous to have that puniſhment, which was not a Jewiſh but a Roman one, inflicted upon him; ſo, in the courſe of that ſiege, they were crucified round their own walls in ſuch vaſt numbers, that they wanted wood to make croſſes to hang them on. All this too was done under the command of Titus Veſpaſian, one of the mildeſt men that ever commanded an army; ſo that the ſupreme order of Providence ſeemed to be forcing into its own ſervice every apparent inſtrument. It is well known that Titus, far from intending the deſtruction of the temple, had the utmoſt ſolicitude to have preſerved it; but all was to no purpoſe, for God had ſaid it ſhould be deſtroyed. To add no more upon this head, the Chriſtians, in general, by attending to their Maſter's predictions, and following his advice, were preſerved from the calamity.

Beſide the deſtruction of the city and temple of Jeruſalem, the Jews themſelves, as a nation, continue a ſtanding proof of the Scripture prophecies. Their continuing a ſeparate people, notwithſtanding their diſperſion through all the earth for above 1700 years, and not mixing with other nations, is an event quite ſingular, that never happened in any other caſe; ſo that it appears quite ſupernatural, as if they were prepared by the providence

of God to prove the truth of the Meſſiah, and to wait till their converſion ſhall crown the work, and be, as the Scripture ſays, "life from the dead."

The other prophecies in the New Teſtament, in their accompliſhment in the courſe of Providence, do alſo afford much entertainment and inſtruction to a ſerious mind. They are principally contained in the Revelations of St John the Divine. I ſhall only now take notice of one, viz. Antichriſt, or the man of ſin, deſcribed in 2 Theſſ. ii. 3. "Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf againſt all that is called God," &c. The Proteſtant writers very generally ſuppoſe that the Pope and Roman Catholic ſyſtem of ſuperſtition are the Antichriſt propheſied of, and indeed they ſeem very much to quadrate with the deſcription. The ſitting in the temple of God, and ſhewing himſelf that he is God, correſponds ſurpriſingly with the extravagant pretenſions to infallibility in that church, and the exceſſive ſecular power and profit which it is intended to bring to the prieſthood. The account in the Revelation, of kings and princes giving their power and honour to the beaſt, and no man being allowed to buy and ſell but thoſe who had the mark of the beaſt, correſponds exactly to the arrangements made by the Popiſh ſtates for many ages, to the uſurped dominion, and to that tyranny over conſcience which was every where exerciſed. The deſcription of myſtical Babylon, in the 17th of the Revelations, ſeems in all reſpects to quadrate with the city of Rome. The ſeven heads are ſaid to be ſeven mountains on which the woman ſitteth, and in the cloſe of the chapter it is ſaid,

"And the woman whom thou ſaweſt, is that great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth." To all this you may add that part of the deſcription, that ſhe was drunken with the blood of the ſaints, which was ſo eminently fulfilled in the dreadful perſecutions for conſcience ſake which were dictated by the antichriſtian ſpirit, and carried on in the antichriſtian ſtates. To finiſh this parallel, the two witneſſes who propheſied in ſackcloth, are ſuppoſed to be thoſe who never received the Romiſh ſuperſtitions, the Waldenſes and the Albigenſes in the Piedmonteſe vallies; by the hiſtory of whom it appears, that their faith and worſhip had been the ſame that it was from the beginning, and the ſame that was received and embraced at the Reformation. This remarkable period is ſuppoſed to be painted in the deadly wound given to the beaſt, notwithſtanding which it did live, and in the ten horns which ſhould hate the whore and make her deſolate, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire.

After this account, I muſt obſerve that there are ſome Proteſtant writers who have not fallen in with the ſcheme of making the Pope to be the Antichriſt deſcribed in the New Teſtament; and as the apoſtle ſays there are many antichriſts, ſo theſe perſons ſay there is an antichriſtian ſpirit in every church, or the corrupt part conſtantly in oppoſition to the ſound; truth ſtriving with error, and pride with the meekneſs of the goſpel. If this is admitted, the Roman catholic church may ſtill be conſidered as the ſcene of antichriſtian uſurpation, and it ſhould put all others upon their guard, leſt they in any degree partake of the ſin, and ſo expoſe themſelves to

the judgment of the great whore. I ſhall only add, that there is a late opinion advanced by Meſſrs Glas and S ———, which, ſo far as I know, was never thought of before theſe, viz. that an eſtabliſhed church is Antichriſt, that whatever has the approbation and authority of the civil government in any ſtate interpoſed in its behalf, not only may, but muſt be contrary to the goſpel. This is certainly carrying matters to exceſs, as is uſual with intereſted perſons, incenſed with what they ſuppoſe to be injurious treatment. Mr Glas being caſt out of the eſtabliſhed church of Scotland, and perhaps by an unneceſſary ſtretch of power, fell into this reſentful opinion; ſo that I do not ſee how this ſentiment can be ſupported, either from Scripture or reaſon, as it would ſeem to make it impoſſible for the kingdoms of this world, to become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Chriſt, or for kings to become nurſing fathers, and queens nurſing mothers to the church; but ſo far I ſhall readily admit, that an intolerant eſtabliſhment, and all tyranny over the conſcience, partakes of an antichriſtian ſpirit.

It will now be time to conſider a little, the objections againſt the Chriſtian religion. It is eaſy to ſee, that there muſt be in every infidel writer particular cavils and exceptions, which are ſo numerous, and ſo various, that it would be in vain to attempt to mention them; but there are ſome general exceptions, which are to be found in all their writings, and on which they inſiſt moſt, that it will be proper to take notice of. Two of theſe have indeed already been taken notice of, as they fell in the way, viz. That reaſon is a ſufficient guide to truth and

happineſs, and therefore revelation is unneceſſary; and that miracles are impoſſible and incredible. Theſe I paſs with what has been ſaid on them above.

A third objection which uſed to be very much inſiſted upon, is the want of univerſality. If the Chriſtian revelation was neceſſary, why was it not given in its full extent from the beginning of the world, and ſpread through all nations? Why was the world in general ſo long left in darkneſs? and at this time, why are there ſuch vaſt regions, and ſuch multitudes of people, that are without the light of the goſpel? Many different anſwers have been given to this objection: ſome ſhewing the extent to which the goſpel has been carried; ſome ſhewing that the mercy of God through Chriſt will extend to all nations, in proportion to the improvement of the meaſure of light afforded them. But I apprehend there is a much more eaſy and ſatisfying anſwer to be given to it, which is this, that the objection proceeds from a groundleſs preſumption that we are to judge of all the divine proceedings, and find fault with them, becauſe they do not exactly follow the rules which we ſhould have preſcribed. It militates equally againſt natural and revealed religion. It may as well be aſked, why is not every reptile a man, and every man an angel? Why is not every creature as happy as he poſſibly could have been made? Nature and providence are full of inſtructive analogy upon this ſubject. Why was not the earth peopled as early and as fully as poſſible? Why were the vaſt tracts of fruitful land in America ſuffered, for ſo many ages, to be a wild

foreſt, inhabited by wolves and tigers, and a few men almoſt as fierce as they? Nay, we may go much farther, and aſk, why was not the world, which appears to be only near 6000 years old, created millions of years before that period? The true and proper anſwer to every ſuch queſtion is, to reſolve it into the ſovereignty of God—He hath a right to beſtow his mercies in the time, manner, and meaſure, that ſeem good unto himſelf. With regard to the difficulty about creation, ſome have attempted to aſſume a neceſſity that every thing is neceſſary to the good of the whole, and ſo a worm in its place is as neceſſary as an angel; and one writer has attempted to prove, that the world could not have been created any ſooner, becauſe, though it were now a million of years old, inſtead of 6000, the queſtion would ſtill remain; but this is only wading beyond our depth, and uſing words to which, if we affix any preciſe, it muſt be allowed we have not a complete or adequate idea. With reſpect to the time of the publication, and the extent of the progreſs of goſpel light, or even the numbers that are benefited by it, I would ſay, "Even ſo, Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight;" and I would particularly obſerve, that ſtating this as an objection againſt the truth of the goſpel, is forgetting the great and fundamental doctrine of the goſpel, that all men are under ſin, and liable to the divine wrath; and that ſending Chriſt into the world is an act of free and ſovereign grace. If, therefore, it be really mercy to thoſe that are ſaved, no objection can be brought againſt it from the number or circumſtances of thoſe that periſh.

4. Another great objection againſt Chriſtianity is, that it introduced into the world perſecution for conſcience ſake, which was before unknown. This is an argument on which infidels delight to enlarge. The fierce conteſts that have been upon the ſubject of religion, and the many who have died in the field, and been brought to a ſcaffold or ſtake on religious accounts, have been ſet forth in all the force of language. There is no argument uſed by infidels that I think may be more eaſily refuted, or rather, indeed, be effectually turned againſt themſelves than this. In the firſt place, it is a plain accompliſhment of our Saviour's prediction, "Think not I am come to ſend peace on the earth." Now, if this never happened before upon a religious account, which the argument ſuppoſes, by what means ſhould he foreſee it but by a preternatural knowledge? But after we have gone thus far, we are ſtill to obſerve, that the Chriſtian religion in no other way introduced perſecution for conſcience ſake, than by ſuffering, not inflicting it. It was perſecuted by Jews and Gentiles with unrelenting fury for 300 years after the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh. Is there any body that opens the Bible, that does not ſee that perſecution is not taught there? It will be ſaid, that in after ages Chriſtians perſecuted Chriſtians, with as much rage as the heathen ever did. I anſwer, if that matter be carefully looked into, it will be found, that it was the ſpirit of the world that perſecuted the meek believers in Chriſt, in every age. There is a remark of a certain writer, that the perſecution carried on againſt the Proteſtants in France, was not by bigots, and thoſe under the

power of ſuperſtition, but by thoſe who were low in their principles, and had no religion of any kind. But this is not ſo great a rarity as he imagined, for it is but ſeldom that perſons who are much in earneſt about religion themſelves, are concerned in oppoſing others; at any rate it is manifeſt, that none can raſhly judge, much leſs perſecute others, if they attend to the doctrine of the goſpel.

## LECTURE IX.

### *Of the Doctrine of the Trinity.*

IT ſeems highly neceſſary that ſtudents of divinity ſhould give particular attention to this ſubject, as it relates to the very nature of the true God who is the object of our worſhip and truſt. Indeed, as it is ſo nearly connected with the doctrine of redemption, its importance is apparent. We cannot form juſt notions, and indeed hardly any, of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, without being explicit upon this head. Let us firſt endeavour to ſtate, as briefly and clearly as poſſible, what the Scriptures teach us to believe on the ſubject, as ſummed up in the Proteſtant confeſſion, diſtinguiſhing it from oppoſite errors, and afterwards give a ſuccinct view of the proofs. The doctrine may be briefly ſummed in two branches: 1. The unity of the divine nature; 2. The Trinity of perſons in the divine eſſence.

Firſt, The unity of the divine nature. That there is but one God, infinite, eternal, unchange-

able, indivisible. The unity of the Godhead is greatly insisted on in Scripture. It seems to have been the capital article of revealed truth under the Old Testament dispensation, in opposition to the vanities of the Gentiles. The first commandment of the decalogue is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" and again, Deut. vi. 4. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." The glory of God is particularly asserted upon this subject, that he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. The unity of God seems to be the grand article of natural religion, clearly supported by reason, from the impossibility of supposing infinite perfection to reside in more than one subject, as well as from the harmony and unity of the design that appears in the universal system. This part of the subject suffers no difficulty which arises from the addition of the other particular from revelation, viz. 2. That in this unity of the divine nature, and in a perfect consistency with it, there is a threefold distinction; in other words, there is the most perfect simplicity and unity of nature, and yet in the mode of existence a plurality. We call it in English, three persons in the Godhead. The ancient fathers used to call it in Greek, τρεις υποστασεις. It would be wrong to contend that either of these gives a full and adequate idea of it, because indeed it is incomprehensible. For in the language of inspiration it is said to be the Father, the Word or the Son, and the Holy Ghost or Spirit. As soon as men began to dispute upon the subject, and exercise their reason, imagination, or invention upon a mat-

ter of mere revelation, (as was soon done by the mixture of Platonic philosophy with the study of the Scriptures) they fell into various opposite errors, which however were all of them constantly condemned and opposed by the consent of orthodox writers. Some said there was no distinction at all in the divine Being, only he was represented in different lights, and made known by different names, as standing in different relations to us. Sabellius, I believe, was the first author of this doctrine, and they were afterwards called from him Sabellians, and sometimes Patropassians, from the consequence of that doctrine, that the Father, as much as the Son, must have suffered upon the cross. Others went to the opposite extreme, and supposed there are three wholly distinct and independent, but concordant Beings. Neither of these have ever been the general sentiments of Christian divines; nor do I think any of them is at all agreeable to Scripture or reason. We find in Scripture most clear and positive assertions of the unity of God on the one hand, and on the other, a real plurality in some respects. There is a common, peculiar, and reciprocal, but distinct agency. The Father is said to beget the Son, to send the Son; and the Son to pray to the Father, to promise and to send the Spirit, which is said to proceed from the Father; and the solemn benediction is in the name and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.

Some time before the Council of Nice, Arius set on foot his notions of the inferiority of the Son and Spirit, calling them, either properly or improperly,

creatures. I use the word *improperly*, because there were some, especially in latter times, called refined Arians, who respected the Son as dependent in the order of nature; but, at the same time, as an eternal effect from an eternal cause. In opposition to Arius, the Council of Nice asserted the Son to be truly and properly God, of one substance with the Father, self-existent and independent. Last of all came the Pelagians and the Socinians, who denied the divine nature of Christ altogether, and asserted that he was only a man. These opinions, as doing the utmost violence to Scripture, and overthrowing the whole doctrine of redemption, deserved to be treated with the utmost abhorrence. Nor indeed are Arians at bottom much better, because the difference between the most exalted creature and the meanest, vanishes altogether when compared with the difference between the mightiest order of created beings and the true God.

The whole economy of our salvation teaches us the necessity of attending to and believing this doctrine; but I see neither necessity nor propriety in endeavouring to dip into the mode of it, and attempting to explain it. If it be a mystery, and above our comprehension, every attempt to explain it must be, if not criminal, yet unsuccessful. And indeed this is the case with almost every thing that relates to God, or is connected with the divine perfection. The wisest way for us, with regard to all revealed truth, is to receive it as revealed, not presuming to be wise above what is written.

I do not mean by this to condemn the Council of Nice, for though there may not be a great deal in

ſome of the expreſſions uſed by them, their only meaning was to expreſs their diſapprobation of the opinion of Arius, which was certainly ſubverſive of the proper divinity of Chriſt. But I apprehend we ought to condemn the making emblems of this truth, ſuch as a triangle inſcribed in a circle. This at leaſt is of no uſe, or more probably it is always pernicious; and indeed I ſhould think it a direct breach of the ſecond commandment; nay, I think attempting to explain it by the powers of created intelligences, is no way ſafe or proper, although done by ſome very worthy men; for an example, when the Trinity is ſuppoſed to correſpond with power, intellect and will, in the human nature.

It is not the uſual way, on moſt ſubjects, to introduce or anſwer objections, before propoſing the proof; yet I believe it will be the moſt proper method on the ſubject we are now treating. The difficulty here does not ariſe from the weakneſs, uncertainty, or obſcurity of the proof, but from the power of prejudice. In order, therefore, to prevent or deſtroy prejudice, it will be beſt to conſider what objections lie in the way of the doctrine; the rather, indeed, that all objections to the doctrine itſelf are reducible to one—that it is contrary to reaſon, abſurd, inconceivable, or impoſſible. It is ſurpriſing to think with what inſolence and triumph ſome have pretended to treat this ſentiment, ſaying it is a contradiction that God ſhould be both one and three at the ſame time. But notwithſtanding the great confidence with which enemies to the truth talk upon this ſubject, I am ſincerely of opinion, that their confidence never could be more miſplaced. Let us

examine the matter coolly and impartially. When men ſpeak of a thing as againſt reaſon, and yet pretend to believe in revelation, the meaning muſt be, that it is ſo manifeſtly abſurd and ſelf-contradictory, that no proof can ſupport a revelation which contains it. But in order to this, it muſt be a thing altogether within the compaſs of our reaſon and judgment; if otherwiſe, the firſt unexperienced dictate of reaſon is nothing at all, neither for nor againſt it. The ſtate of nature and experimental philoſophy did ſcarcely ever ſhew things to be what men imagined them before; neither is it at all wonderful that revelation ſhould inform us of what we could not have ſuſpected. The uſe of revelation indeed implies this. Therefore the common diſtinction of ſyſtematical divines, is far from being either obſcure or improper, that things may be above reaſon, and yet not contradictory to it.

By this expreſſion, *above reaſon*, may be underſtood two things—beyond the power of reaſon to diſcover, and above the reach of reaſon to comprehend. In the firſt ſenſe it would be abſurd to controvert it, and even in the other, if it was carefully attended to, and prejudice laid aſide, there would be little difficulty. The enemies of the truth always put more in the idea than is intended, or ought to be contained in it. The juſt ſtatement of it is preciſely this, we believe a fact which is fully proved and authenticated, although there are ſome circumſtances, as to its cauſe and conſequences, that we do not underſtand. There are many things in theological, moral, and natural knowledge, in which the

caſe is the very ſame. I believe that God is a ſpirit, and that there are alſo created ſpirits different from God, wholly unembodied, and yet I have very obſcure and indiſtinct ideas, if any idea properly at all, of what a ſpirit is, and the manner of its operation. Carteſians believe that a ſpirit has no extenſion, and that a hundred thouſand of them may be in the ſame place; which, by the bye, is an example of the abſurdity with which men talk upon ſubjects which they do not underſtand; for, according to them, place is a relation incompetent to a ſpirit, and therefore it is as abſurd to ſay that a ſpirit is in a place, as that three are in the ſame place. The whole matter is above our comprehenſion, and no man can make me underſtand, either how diſtinct ſubſtances can occupy the ſame place, or even the Newtonian opinion, that a ſubſtance, ſimple and indiviſible, can be in every place. From which it is demonſtrable, that there may be many circumſtances relating to things of great moment and certainty, that are to us totally incomprehenſible. In natural things I believe, that the ſeed rotting in the ground is the mean of producing the blade of the future ſtalk; but if you aſk me how this is done, or how the moiſt earth can have any influence either on the mortification or the growth, I know nothing at all about it.

Therefore, though we ſay that the Trinity in unity is incomprehenſible, or above reaſon, we ſay nothing that is abſurd or contrary to reaſon; ſo far from it, I may ſay rather it is conſonant to reaſon and the analogy of nature, that there ſhould be many things in the divine nature that we cannot fully

comprehend. There are many such things in his providence, and surely much more in his essence.

But when our adversaries are pressed upon this subject, they say sometimes it is not an incomprehensible mystery we find fault with, but an apparent contradiction that God should be three and one. We know very well what numbers are, and we know perfectly, whatever is three cannot be one, or one three. But this is owing to great inattention, or great obstinacy. We do not say there are three Gods and yet one God; three persons and yet one person; or that the divine Being is three in the same sense and respect that he is one; but only that there is a distinction, consistent with perfect unity of nature. I apprehend great reserve and self-denial is our duty on this subject. It has sometimes been said, why should we doubt whether there can be three persons in one nature, when we ourselves are an example of an incomprehensible union of this nature in our persons. If this be used merely as an illustration, and to shew that the thing is possible and credible, I have no objection to it; but if it be carried farther, it is improper and dangerous.

Upon the whole, we ought to consider the objection against this doctrine as altogether ill-founded, and be ready to receive, with all humility, the revelation of God upon this subject, just as he has been pleased to communicate it.

The second thing to be attended to is the proof of the doctrine, as contained in the holy Scriptures. On this I will just very shortly consider the Scripture proof of the Trinity in general, and then, at some more length, point out the proofs of the proper

deity of Chriſt the Son; upon which laſt, as is natural to ſuppoſe, the controverſy hath always chiefly turned.

The proofs of the Trinity in general may be taken, 1. From the form of baptiſm; we are commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

As baptiſm is the initiating profeſſion taken from all converts, it ſeems evidently to point at the great object of worſhip and obedience. Neither do I ſee at all how it can be accounted for, that the Son and Holy Ghoſt ſhould be claſſed and put upon the ſame footing with the Father, but upon the ſuppoſition of this truth. And indeed their very deſignation leads us to an equality of rank; it is not ſaid, in the name of God, and the name of Jeſus of Nazareth, or his human name, but in the name of the Father and the Son. Thoſe who will conſider this matter attentively, will find more in it than perhaps at firſt ſight appeared. Baptiſm is certainly the badge of Chriſtianity, the ſeal of God's covenant. With whom then is a covenant made? Doubtleſs with thoſe in whoſe name we were baptized, and therefore our covenant God is moſt fully deſcribed by Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. To this you may add, that the apoſtle Paul ſeemed plainly, in the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, to conſider baptiſm as pointing at ſomething very different from any relation that a miniſter could ſuſtain. 1 Cor. i. 13, 14, 15. "Is Chriſt divided? Was Paul crucified for you?" &c.

2. The proof of the Trinity in general may be taken from the form of ſolemn benediction—the

love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. As in the former instance, the three are taken in as the object of worship and obedience, here they are plainly conjoined as the source of blessedness.

3. The proof of the Trinity in general may be taken from an express passage of Scripture, 1 John v. 7. "There are three that bear record in heaven," &c.

## LECTURE X.

WE come now to prove the doctrine of the Trinity from the proofs of the proper deity of the Son and Spirit. On this the controversy has chiefly turned, and especially the first, the divinity of the Son; because, if this was admitted, it would be to very little purpose to object against the other. For this reason we find, that ever since the first starting of the controversy, it has been litigated with great zeal and warmth on both sides. This was to be expected, as it must evidently appear an article of the utmost moment to both. I must observe, however, that the controversy has been chiefly managed by Arians till of late years. Now it seems to me there are but very few proper Arians, the greater number of the oppofers of the truth are Socinians.

You are not to expect that I should go through the whole of this controversy, which has been carried to so great a length; the passages of Scripture

adduced on both ſides are more numerous than we would ſuppoſe; and the criticiſms, objections and anſwers, are exceedingly voluminous. You will ſay, then, the controverſy muſt needs be difficult and obſcure. The conſequence is not juſt; for whenever there is a ſtrong bias and inclination one way, it is eaſy for ingenious men to perplex and lengthen out a diſpute. The great matter is the objection I mentioned in the preceding diſcourſe. If men be once fully ſatisfied that this thing is not impoſſible or incredible, and be willing to aſſent to the account of the nature of God without prejudice, as it ſtands in his own word, I do not think there is any uncertainty in it at all. I ſhall ſtate to you the chief heads of any importance that have been uſed.

1. The name of God and his titles, the moſt tranſcendent and peculiar, are given to Chriſt. Through the Old Teſtament, the name of Jehovah or Lord, but particularly the firſt, is given to one who is often called an angel, and the angel of the covenant; and by this manner of ſpeaking in ſeveral paſſages, muſt be diſtinguiſhed from God the Father, as in the 110th Pſalm, "The Lord ſaid unto my Lord." This, therefore, muſt be underſtood of Chriſt. The angel who appeared to Hagar, Gen. xvi. and that appeared to Jacob at Bethel, Gen. xiii. are both called God. In Exodus, chap. iii. an angel is ſaid to have appeared to Moſes at the buſh, and yet this angel ſays, I am the God of your father, the God of Iſrael, who delivered the law on Mount Sinai, and yet Stephen ſays, Acts vii. 38. that it was an angel that ſpoke unto Moſes upon mount Sinai, and was with the fathers; but

what ſerves to apply many of theſe paſſages in the moſt preciſe manner, is comparing Numb. xxi. 8. with 1 Cor. x. 9. In the firſt it is ſaid, that the Iſraelites tempted God, and ſpake againſt God, and that therefore he ſent among them fiery ſerpents. In the other paſſage the apoſtle Paul affirmeth, that this was Chriſt: "Let us not tempt Chriſt, as ſome of them alſo tempted, and were deſtroyed of ſerpents." See farther, Pſalm ii. 12. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Pſal. xlv. 7. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. which paſſage the apoſtle Paul applies to Chriſt, Heb. i. 8. "But unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Another proof may be taken from Prov. viii. 22. the deſcription of wiſdom. Again, in Iſa. vi. from the beginning, "In the year that king Uzziah died," &c. This paſſage is expreſsly applied to Chriſt by the apoſtle John, xii. 41. when, having cited the paſſage, he ſays, "Theſe things ſaid Iſaiah," &c. The truth is, there is hardly any writing in the Old Teſtament but, by comparing it with the New, we may draw a proof of the divinity of Chriſt.

2. The thing itſelf, the propoſition that Jeſus Chriſt is God, is contained in the moſt explicit terms, not in one, but in many places of Scripture; not in figure, but in plain, ſimple language, John i. 1. "In the beginning was the word," &c. Phil. ii. 6. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," &c. John x. 30. "I and my Father are one." 1 John v. 20. "This is the true God and eternal life." It would be endleſs to mention all fetches and imaginations of men

under the power of prejudice, to evade these texts; but I only call to your mind what was before mentioned—Cleave to either side of the question, and say, Whether or not the Scriptures have plainly affirmed Christ's divinity? It is not only the affixations, but the reasoning upon some of them, that fixes the sense, as in the Philippians. And in that affirmation, "I and my Father are one," it is undeniable that the Jews understood him in that sense, for it is added, "They immediately took up stones to stone him," &c. It has been often said by reasoners upon this subject, supposing it was the design of the Scripture to affirm the divinity of Christ, it does not appear what plainer or stronger words could have been used.

3. The most distinguishing and essential attributes of the true God are given to Christ. I shall mention only his eternity, immutability, omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. It is not easy to conceive any attribute incommunicable, if these are not. Eternity seems plainly to be ascribed to him, Prov. viii. 22. Rev. i. 8. &c. and in the famous passage, Mic. v. 2. "Whose goings forth have been of old from (1.) everlasting." Indeed I reckon the frequent appellation of Jehovah as a sufficient proof of this; the word is derived from what signifies existence, Exod. iii. 14. John viii. 38.

(2.) Immutability, Heb. i. 10. Heb. xviii. 8. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

(3.) Omniscience. John xvi. 30. "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things;" and again, John xxi. 17. "Lord, thou knowest all things," &c.

It is remarkable, that the knowledge of the heart is aſſerted in ſeveral paſſages to diſtinguiſh the true God. 1 Kings viii. 39. "Thou, even thou only knoweſt the hearts of all the children of men;" and John xvii. 10. "I the Lord ſearch the hearts and try the reins," &c. yet this very perfection our Lord claims to himſelf, Rev. ii. 23. and the apoſtle John teſtifies that he knew all men, John ii. 24. and knew what was in man, John ii. 25.; this is further confirmed, iv. 12, 13. "The word of God," &c.

(4.) Omnipreſence. Matt. xviii. 20. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," &c. Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you always," &c.

(5.) Omnipotence. Col. i. 17. "By him all things conſiſt." Creation is aſcribed to Chriſt, John i. 3. "All things were made by him," &c. and in the ſame chapter, verſe 10. "and the world was made by him." Heb. i. 2. "By whom alſo he made the world." Col. i. 15, 16, 17. "Who is the image of the inviſible God," &c. The argument from creation is very ſtrong. It is the firſt and great relation we ſtand under to God, nor can we conceive any thing that more properly, or in a more diſtinguiſhing manner, characterizes the true God, who pleads it ſo often, to diſtinguiſh himſelf from the vanities of the Gentiles, Pſal. xix. 1. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work."

5. The fifth and laſt proof of the divinity of Chriſt, may be taken from divine worſhip being

commanded to be given to him, and being accepted by him without reproof, when it is expreſsly rejected by the inferior miniſters of Providence. It is commanded to be given to him, John iii. 22, 23. "The Father himſelf judgeth no man." Phil. ii. 5. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him," &c. It is actually given him by the wiſe men, Matt. ii. 11. by the rulers of the ſynagogue, Matt. v. 8. by women of Canaan, Matt. xv. 25. by the diſciples in general, Matt. xx. 5. and you ſee that worſhip is rejected by an angel, Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

## LECTURE XI.

I PROCEED now ſhortly to conſider the proofs of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The firſt thing neceſſary here, is to eſtabliſh the perſonality of the Spirit; that he is properly a perſon or ſubſtance, and not merely a power, gift, or qualification. The name of ſpirit, in all languages, ſignifies a wind or breath. It is ſuppoſed this word is choſen to repreſent divine things, or the divine nature, becauſe it bears ſome reſemblance to what is unſeen, and yet infinitely powerful. The wind is made uſe of to repreſent the Holy Ghoſt, and to ſignify angels and the ſouls of men, and alſo the gifts and graces of the Spirit. That when the Holy Ghoſt is ſpoken of, a perſon or ſubſtance is meant, as diſtinguiſhed from any grace or qualification he may poſſeſs or beſtow, may be eaſily made to appear from many paſſages of Scripture. John xiv. 16. "And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another

Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." John xvi. 13. "When he the Spirit of truth is come," &c. 1 Cor. xii. 4. "There are diverſity of gifts, but the ſame Spirit," &c. The form of baptiſm alſo proves the ſame thing, as well as all thoſe paſſages that ſpeak of giving the Spirit —reſiſting the Spirit, &c.

That the Holy Ghoſt is truly and properly God, I think appears with great evidence from the form of baptiſm, now that we have fully proved the divinity of Chriſt, whoſe perſonality we cannot doubt. The Holy Ghoſt being joined with the Father and the Son, carries the ſtrongeſt conviction with it that he is of the ſame nature with both. The ſame thing may be ſaid of the form of ſolemn benediction.

The divinity of the Holy Ghoſt ſeems to be eſtabliſhed in Acts v. 3. where Peter ſays to Ananias and Sapphira, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart," &c. We might alſo from ſeveral paſſages ſhew the divine attributes given to the Spirit, as omnipotence, Pſal. cxix. "Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit," &c. Omniſcience, Cor. ii. 10. "The Spirit ſearcheth all things, even the deep things of God;" nay, creation ſeems to be aſcribed to him as well as the Son; Gen. i. 2. it is ſaid, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and Job xxxiii. 4. "The Spirit of the Lord hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

There were in the ancient churches conſiderable controverſies about the expreſſion of the articles of faith upon this ſubject. The very words of Scrip-

ture, John xv. 26. are, that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father. He is alſo called the Spirit of the Son, and the Spirit of Chriſt, Rom. viii. 9. Gal. xiv. 6. Phil. i. 14. 1 Pet. i. 11. both the Father and the Son are ſaid to ſend the Spirit, John xv. 26. John xvi. 7. Gal. iv. 6. Luke xxiv. 49.

Therefore the uſual way of ſpeaking, and that in all the ancient ſymbols and confeſſions is, that the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt proceedeth from the Father and the Son. If any one ſhould preſume to inquire farther into the meaning, or aſk the difference between being begotten and proceeding, I ſhould willingly and cheerfully confeſs my ignorance, and that I believe all others are equally ignorant, and that every attempt to ſay more than is actually contained in Scripture, is not only impoſſible but hurtful. There was a very violent diſpute between the Latin and Greek churches, whether it was proper to ſay the Holy Ghoſt proceeded from the Father and Son, or from the Father only. The whole current of antiquity, and the whole Latin churches are for the former, as well as the Proteſtants in general; but it is not a modern controverſy.

I proceed to conſider ſome of the objections againſt the reaſoning above, and unleſs I enter into the criticiſms on particular texts, they may be all reduced to the reaſoning on the titles and attributes. They object that ſome of the higheſt titles were not given to the Son, as the Higheſt or Moſt High, the Almighty or Supreme over all, one God and Father of all, one God of whom are all things. But it is eaſy to anſwer, that none of theſe titles are greater

or more diſtinguiſhing than, as has been ſhewn, do really belong to Chriſt, and that ſome of thoſe mentioned are alſo aſcribed to Chriſt, ſuch as the Almighty, and God over all. So that they are obliged to have recourſe to the meaneſt quibbles to interpret away theſe texts. As for the expreſſion one God, and the title one God, the Father, of whom are all things, they are plainly uſed in a diſtribution of perſonal acts or prerogatives, one God the Father, *of* whom are all things, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *by* whom are all things.

The other objection is, that ſuch titles are aſcribed to him in a lower ſenſe than to the Father. Nothing could ſuggeſt ſuch an objection as this, except the power of prejudice. They muſt firſt take for granted their own ſentiments, before they can perceive any ſuch thing; beſides, many of them are ſuch as do not admit of a proportion in this way, ſuch as creation, omniſcience, omnipotence.

## LECTURE XII.

### *Of the Decrees of God.*

WE have this ſtrong aſſertion in Scripture, "Can any by ſearching find out the Almighty," &c. If the nature of God has ſomething in it altogether unſearchable to us, ſo muſt alſo his decrees. It is certainly proper and neceſſary for divines to know all that can be known on this ſubject, and therefore the ſtudy of a whole life would

be well beſtowed on it, if it were ſure of ſucceſs. Yet I apprehend a caution is not unneceſſary while we are entering upon it. Our great wiſdom conſiſts in receiving, admitting, remembering, and applying, whatever is clearly revealed in Scripture, with regard both to the nature and government of God; at the ſame time, we ought to reſtrain an impatient curioſity, and guard againſt unneceſſary, inexplicable, and hurtful queſtions, on theſe ſubjects. The Scriptures do not contain any thing that is unfit for us to know. If it ſeemed neceſſary to God to reveal the univerſality of his providence, and the certainty of his purpoſe, we ought without doubt to believe and improve it. On the other hand, let us not preſume to go any farther than he hath pointed out to us the way. Whatever he hath covered with a veil, it would be both raſhneſs and impiety to attempt to penetrate. It is therefore my deſign to ſtate this matter to you in as preciſe and ſcriptural a manner as I am able, although I muſt neceſſarily uſe ſeveral of the theological ſyſtematical phraſes, becauſe without them the various opinions could neither be ſifted nor explained.

The expreſſion itſelf, "the decrees of God," is in a great meaſure, if not wholly technical. In the Old Teſtament, indeed, there are ſeveral expreſſions particularly relating to the frame and conſtitution of nature, which are tranſlated in the Engliſh Bible *decrees*, as in Prov. viii. 29. "When he gave to the ſea his decree," &c. and in the ſecond Pſalm, ſpeaking of the raiſing Meſſiah to his throne, "I will declare the decree." In all of theſe I believe (for I have conſulted moſt of them) it is the ſame

word that is frequently or usually translated *statute*, and to be sure has a meaning somewhat similar to that of the word used in theology; that is, it signifies the order or purpose of God in nature and providence. In the New Testament there is no expression on this subject that has been translated *decree*, though some of the phrases might have been so translated. The expressions in the New Testament are *council, purpose, determinate council, foreknowledge;* and when it relates to the state of man, *chusing, ordaining, predestinating*. I enter upon the criticism of the Greek words, because I think it is manifest they are not only translated well into English, but that they are mostly, if not wholly, of the same import that they are usually understood to possess. I shall now shew you a sample of the Socinian criticism on Acts xiii. 48. It is said, οσοι ησαν τεταγμενοι εις ζωην αιωνιον, which they translate, "as many as were set in order, or well prepared for eternal life, believed." They observe that τεταγμενοι means, set in order like a disciplined army. But it is manifest that the word here means, *particularly appointed and ordained*. By comparing together the several expressions used, the meaning that we must assign to the whole is, that the plan of providence and grace, as well as the system of nature, must be supposed to be fixed and determined, and not loose and uncertain, till the event, or till one thing be ascertained or determined by another; that things are not to God as they are to us, to whom things future have no certainty or stability, but that as far back as we can carry our ideas they were known, and therefore certainly ordained. Or,

as some express it, that every thing that comes to have a transient existence in time, had, as it were, an original eternal pre-existence in the divine mind. Yet, after all, you see there is something in the expression *decrees* or *purposes*, which seems to take its rise only from our own situations and imperfections.

Men are obliged to meditate, concert, and digest their plans of future conduct, before they begin to act; and then it is called their purpose, resolution, or design, as distinct from the actual execution. From this we seem by analogy to borrow the divine decrees. Yet every thing that implies or arises from ignorance, uncertainty, weakness, or imperfection, must be as much as is in our power, separated and abstracted, when we speak of the decrees of God.

This leads us to observe, that it has often been remarked by divines, that we are not to consider the divine decrees, in so far as they are acts of the divine will, as being any thing different or distinct from the divine nature. There are some who have used the expression *immanent decrees*, a phrase which I confess I do not in the least degree understand the meaning of, and therefore I can neither affirm nor contradict it; without doubt we are to separate every thing belonging to created weakness. We are not to suppose that God needs forethought to discover, or time to digest his plans, or that by any act of his will he seeks information, or seeks or receives gratification from any thing without him. If by calling the decrees of God immanent acts, it is meant to deny these, it is so far just. But when it

is affirmed, that the acts of the divine will are the same with the divine nature, as if this explained the difference between divine and human volitions, this I confess is to me quite incomprehensible.

In what shall be further offered on this subject, I shall follow this method :—

1. Speak a little of the object of the divine decrees.

2. Of the order of the decrees.

3. Of the character, quality, or attributes of the decrees, as given in Scripture.

4. Of their uses.

I. Let us consider the object of the decrees, and of this but a little, because it will occur again where it is of moment to examine it; yet it will throw some light upon some parts of the doctrine to observe,

1. That the objects of the divine decrees are strictly and properly universal; so much so indeed, as not to admit of any exception, or shadow of exception—all creatures, and all their actions, and all events. Let us vary it as we please, still it relates to every action, and every mode of the action, and every quality that can be attributed to it, whatsoever comes to pass. The reason of this is plain; whatever we shall think fit to say upon the connexion or influence of one creature or thing upon another, from which all the difficulty and confusion arises, yet every such thing, and that connexion itself, as much as the things to which it relates, is the object to which the divine foreknowledge and the divine purpose extended. One would think that men should be agreed on this point; and probably they

are so, if they understood one another; all but those extravagant persons, as they may well be called, who finding themselves hard pressed by the arguments drawn from the divine prescience, have thought it best to deny the foreknowledge of God altogether, or affirm that nothing that is future can possibly be certainly, or any more than conjecturally known, till it happens. But this sentiment is so repugnant to Scripture, and indeed to the common sense and reason of mankind, that few have strictly and sincerely defended it, though some have occasionally and hypocritically advanced it.

2. With respect to the object of the divine decrees, it must be admitted, that there is some difference between the light in which some events and actions are to be considered, and others. The great difficulty, indeed, and that which will speedily set bounds to our inquiry on the subject, is to shew wherein the difference consists; yet it is equally certain, from revelation and reason, that natural good and evil, and moral good and evil, are to be considered as not in the same sense the object of divine appointment. This leads us to the

Second general head, which was to consider the order of the decrees. Many things may be, and many things have been said upon this subject. Divines who have published systems, have generally exercised their ingenuity in giving what they call an order of the decrees. The chief thing such writers have in view, is to form a conception for themselves and others, with regard to, and to account for the divine purposes, with regard to the final state of man. The orders which have been laid down by

different writers, are so very numerous, that they all seem to me to labour under, and equally to labour under this prodigious weakness, that they represent the Supreme Being as varying and marshalling his views, and comparing as men do, which yet is acknowledged to be wrong. They also seem to carry in them the supposition of successive duration; yet successive duration we have generally agreed not to ascribe to God, although, of any other kind of existence we have not the least conception. It is impossible for me to go through all the different arrangements that have been made by particular authors: I shall therefore only give you a succinct view of the chief differences of divines of different classes, Calvinists, Arminians, Socinians.

Calvinists are divided upon this subject into two sorts, commonly called Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians. The reason of the names are, from one being of opinion that God in ordaining the elect and reprobate, considered man as before the fall, and the other as fallen and in a state of guilt.

The first say, that in laying down a plan, what is last in the execution is first in the intention, that God purposed to glorify his mercy and justice in the everlasting felicity of some, called vessels of mercy; and in the everlasting perdition of others, called vessels of wrath. That to accomplish this purpose he resolved to create the world, to put man in a condition in which he would certainly fall; to send the Redeemer in the fulness of time to carry on the whole plan of salvation, as we now find it in the oracles of truth.

The Sublapsarians say, that the order of purpo-

ſing ſhould be the ſame as the order of execution. That the decrees of God being eternal, there can no order of time be applied to them, but that which takes place in the execution. Therefore they ſay, that God propoſed to make man innocent and holy, with powers to preſerve his innocence, but liable to fall: that he foreſaw the fall, and permitted it, and from the corrupted maſs freely choſe ſome as the objects of mercy, and left others to periſh in the ruins of their apoſtaſy, and that to accompliſh this purpoſe he reſolved to ſend the Saviour, &c.

It is eaſy to ſay ſomething very plauſible on each ſide of the queſtion between the two. It ſeems very ſtrong what Sublapſarians ſay, that the idea of time and order belongs only to the execution; but why do they alſo ſpeak of order, when it is certain that, as far as we can clearly ſpeak of deſign or purpoſe at all, the means ſeem to be deſigned for the end, and not the end for the means? The Supralapſarians have alſo this evident advantage of all the reſt, that they have the ſovereignty of God *directly*, for what all the reſt are obliged to come to *at laſt*. It muſt be obſerved, that the ſtrongeſt Supralapſarians do conſtantly aſſert the holineſs and juſtice of the divine providence. If you aſk them how they reconcile the divine juſtice with the abſolute and certain event, they confeſs they cannot explain it; but they affirm that all that the others ſay to this is perfectly trifling, and leſs reaſonable than their confeſſion of ignorance.

The Arminians ſay, that God decreed to create man innocent; and that after he had fallen he reſolved for ſatisfaction to juſtice to appoint a Saviour;

that he decreed to ſave thoſe that ſhould believe and repent; to give to all ſufficient grace for that purpoſe; and finally to ſave and reward thoſe who ſhould endure to the end. It is plain that whatever reaſon they may offer with great plauſibleneſs for ſeveral things, when taken in a ſeparate and detached view, nothing can be weaker than the Arminian ſcheme, conſidered as a ſyſtem of the divine purpoſe, becauſe they leave out or ſuſpend the purpoſe at every ſtage.

As to the Socinians, they do generally deny the reality of the decrees altogether, and ſay that the event is wholly uncertain, and ſuſpended upon the will of the creature; as many of them as maintain or admit the foreknowledge of God, do it contrary to their other principles.

If I were to ſay any thing upon this ſubject, (I mean the order of the decrees) I would ſay nearly as Pulit in his Syſtem, as contained in the notes upon Rulet, has ſaid, which is in ſubſtance this, that God réſolved from all eternity to manifeſt his own glory, and illuſtrate his moral excellence, wiſdom, power, holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs and truth, in the production and government of a created ſyſtem. That for this purpoſe the whole ſyſtem, and all the facts of which it conſiſts, and their dependence one upon another, and the order itſelf in which they were to take plac were ordained. If the whole, then certainly every particular part as fully as the whole, is the object of one abſolute decree. In this view they are all upon a footing; at the ſame time we do not pretend to diſpute that things are ordain-

ed with conſiderable difference; but this difference it is hard or impoſſible for us to explain. There is certainly a difference between the ordination of things natural, and thoſe which are ſinful or holy. The very ſinful diſpoſition, conſidered as becoming a part of the general plan, is certainly as holy an ordination as any other, yet the Scripture teaches us to conſider this as a thing quite different from God's determining to ſend his Son into the world to ſave ſinners. It ſeems to be a matter inſiſted on in the ſtrongeſt manner in Scripture, that the evil or guilt of every creature is to be aſcribed to the creature, as to its proper and adequate cauſe; at the ſame time it ſeems fully as plain, that whatever connexion there may be between one evil and another, the choice of the veſſels of mercy is free and unconditional, and that the rejection of others is imputed to the ſovereignty of God, Luke x. 21. John xii. 39. That the choice of the veſſels of mercy is free and ſovereign, appears from the words of Scripture; from their univerſal ſtate, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; from their viſible character, and from the means of their recovery, I mean the omnipotence of divine grace.

## LECTURE XIII.

I Now proceed to the *third* thing upon this ſubject, which was to conſider the character, qualities, and attributes of the decrees of God, as they are given to them in Scripture in expreſs terms, or manifeſtly founded upon Scripture truths, and par-

ticularly upon such truths as relate to the decrees. Of this the chief are what follow.

1. Eternity. We have express mention made, Eph. iii. 11. of God's eternal purpose; and believers are said to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The last expression is of the same import with the first; for whatever is before the beginning of time, is to be considered as eternal. This indeed is essential to the divine purpose, inseparable from the very meaning of the word *decree*; and, if I am not mistaken, one of the chief things we are to be taught by it is, that whatsoever comes to pass in revolving years, is not loose, but was fixed in the divine mind before time itself began. It is exceeding difficult, however, at once to restrain an improper curiosity, and to speak with precision on the subject, and with safety. Some have raised a question, whether there is not a necessity of supposing the existence and the nature of God, as previous to his decrees. To which it is commonly said, that there is a priority of order, though not of time; a priority like that of the cause to its inseparable effect; as the sun is the cause of light, yet the creation of the sun would not be before or antecedent to the light; they are inseparable and necessarily existent. One would think there was nothing amiss in this way of speaking, or of saying in consequence of it, that the decrees are to God's nature as an eternal effect to an eternal cause; and yet I am afraid there is here what we find in many subjects of theology, a mixture of repugnant ideas intricate and difficult, eternity, and time—beginning and no beginning. When we speak of an effect of

a cauſe, we cannot do otherwiſe than think of ſomething produced, ſome alteration, or ſomething that was not before. This is the caſe with all the ſimilitudes brought to illuſtrate it, as the creation of the ſun and the co-exiſtence of light; or another made uſe of by ſome of the refined Arians, who meant to ſay the Son is produced by the Father, as an eternal effect of an eternal cauſe; as the print of a man's foot in the ſand is cauſed by his ſetting down his foot, but not poſterior in point of time. But all this is truly abſurd when ſpeaking of God, becauſe it includes ſome definite idea of what might and did begin to take place. I ſhould be apt to think, that one of the chief reaſons why any thing is revealed to us concerning the decrees of God, is to give us an awful impreſſion of his infinite majeſty, his ſupreme dominion, and the abſolute dependence of every creature upon him; ſo that it is enough for us to ſay, that his purpoſe is before all worlds, antecedent to all time or the idea of ſucceſſion, being indeed entirely inſeparable from the idea of his exiſtence.

2. The next thing to be conſidered is the liberty of God in his decrees. They are according to the council of his own will. Almoſt all the ſyſtems ſay, that God did moſt wiſely, moſt juſtly, and moſt freely decree whatſoever comes to paſs.

The chief objection to this ariſes from what uſed to be called many years ago the Beltiſtian ſcheme, of which, whatever chance-traces may be ſeen in former authors, Leibnitz is the proper author. Of this ſcheme it is the leading part, or rather the foundation of the whole, to ſay that God, infinitely

wise and good, must necessarily chuse the best in every thing. That, therefore, of all possible systems, this which he has chosen, because it has taken place, must necessarily be the best, and he could not chuse any other; so that from the unalterable rectitude of his nature, he is as invariably determined by his necessity as any of his creatures. This boasted demonstration would be defensible, perhaps, were it not that its very foundations are good for nothing. Its ideas are not applicable to the divine Being; better and best are definite terms, and actual comparisons. We say a thing is better, when it is preferable to some others; and best, when it is a thing absolutely preferable to all others. Now with what propriety can it be said, that in the plans that were possible to infinite wisdom and power, there is one best. Have we comprehension sufficient to see this, and therefore to say it? It seems to me that a demonstration might be given to the contrary. The whole system of creation is either finite and temporal, or infinite and eternal. If it be finite, it seems absurd to say that it would not be made better by being made larger and similar; and if it was not from eternity, it might have been made many thousands of years sooner. If, on the contrary, it be infinite and eternal, the possible combinations of an infinite system are truly infinite, and there cannot be a best. The patrons of this scheme, when pressed with these difficulties, have recourse to what they should have begun with, the incomprehensibleness of time and space, and say that we cannot apply any of the ideas of sooner or later to eternity,

or larger or leſſer to ſpace. The impoſſibility of uniting infinite to definite qualities, ſhould have prevented them from ſaying, that of all poſſible ſyſtems infinite wiſdom muſt chuſe the beſt; but when we ſpeak of time and ſpace, nothing is more clear than that if at any time a thing has exiſted ten years, I can ſuppoſe that it exiſted twenty years; and that if any thing be of finite extent, I can ſuppoſe it enlarged as well as diminiſhed. So great is the obſtinacy of people in adhering to their ſyſtems, that Dr Clark reduces an antagoniſt to the abſurdity of affirming, that though the univerſe were moved ten millions of leagues in any direction, it would ſtill be in the ſame place; and another writer of ſome note ſays, either that the thing is impoſſible that the world could have been created ſooner than it was, or that if it had been created 5000 years ſooner, yet it would have been created at the ſame time. Beſides, this ſcheme ſeems to me to labour under two great and obvious difficulties, that the infinite God ſhould ſet limits to himſelf by the production of a created ſyſtem—It brings creation a great deal too near the Creator to ſay it is the alternative of Omnipotence. The other difficulty is, that it ſeems to make ſomething which I do not know how to expreſs otherwiſe than by the ancient Stoical fate, antecedent and ſuperior even to God himſelf. I would therefore think it beſt to ſay, with the current of orthodox divines, that God was perfectly free in his purpoſe and providence, and that there is no reaſon to be ſought for the one or the other beyond himſelf.

Let us conſider the wiſdom and ſovereignty of

his decrees. I put these together, not that they are the same, but that they seem, though not opposite, to limit each other in their exercise, and the one of which is often to be resolved into the other. Wisdom is ascribed to the decrees of God; or rather, wisdom indeed is particularly ascribed to God himself, as one of his essential perfections, and therefore, by necessary consequence, it must belong to his providence in time, and his purposes from eternity. The meaning of this, as far as we can conceive, when used by us is, that the best and noblest ends are designed, and the best and most suitable means in accomplishing these ends. And indeed all the wisdom that appears in the works and ways of God when carried into effect, must be supposed in the original purpose. But how shall we join the sovereignty with this? Sovereignty seems to resolve the whole into mere will, and therefore to stand opposed to the wisdom of the proceeding. Accordingly there are some who, in speaking of the decrees, rest them entirely and totally on the sovereignty of God, and say that not only the reasons are not made known and unsearchable to us, but that there is no reason at all of the preference of one thing to another, but the divine will. There have been some writers who have founded the very nature of virtue and vice upon the divine will. Those who think otherwise usually say, it is making the decrees not absolute only, but arbitrary; not only unsearchable, but unreasonable: and indeed the founding every thing upon mere will, seems to take away the moral character of the Deity, and to leave us no meaning when we say God is infinitely wise

and holy, juſt and good. I am however inclined to think, that thoſe who have gone the furtheſt upon the ſovereignty of God, only meant that we could not, or ought not to dive into the reaſon of the divine Providence; that his will ought to bound all our inquiries, and be a full and ſatisfactory anſwer to all our difficulties; and if it be taken in this way, it will not be eaſy to overthrow it.

If we look into the Scripture doctrine upon this ſubject, we ſhall, if I miſtake not, ſee both the wiſdom and ſovereignty of God aſſerted in the ſtrongeſt terms, united together and founded upon one another, Job ix. 4. "He is wiſe in heart;" he is ſaid to be God only wiſe, Rev. xvi. 27. 1 Tim. i. 15. Jude 25. Eph. iii. 10. and Rom. xi. 38. ſpeaking expreſsly of the decrees, "O the depth," &c. at the ſame time the ſovereignty of God is aſſerted, and events reſolved into it, Luke x. 21. "In that hour Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit," &c. I would here call your attention to two paſſages very remarkable, one in the Old Teſtament, the other in the New. The book of Job, it is agreed by interpreters, was compoſed expreſsly upon the difficulty of Providence, ariſing from the afflictions of good men, and the proſperity of the wicked; but in that book, after the reaſoning of Job and his friends, when God himſelf is brought in ſpeaking out of the whirlwind, in the 38th and 39th chapters, he ſays not one word either of the wiſdom or juſtice of his proceedings, but in language infinitely majeſtic, diſplays and dwells upon the greatneſs of his power. It is true, indeed, the beautiful poetical diſplay of the order of creation, may be ſaid to imply in it wiſdom as well

as power; but if so, all that is there advanced, is to illustrate the power and wisdom of the Creator, and by that means to impose silence on the rash challenges of the creature.

The other example is from the New Testament, where the apostle, after introducing an objection against the divine purpose as to the state of man, does not offer any other reason, but has recourse to the sovereignty of God, Rom. vii. 18, 19, 20. "Therefore it is not of him that willeth," &c.

It will be perhaps hard or impossible for you to enter into this at once, as I confess it was to me in early life; but I now see more of the necessity of subjecting ourselves to the divine sovereignty, and making use of it to restrain and repress our rash and curious inquiries. It is finely imagined in Milton, that he makes a part of the damned in hell to torment themselves with unsearchable questions about fixed fate, foreknowledge absolute. It is certain that we cannot now fathom those subjects, if we ever shall to eternity. As I hinted formerly, it is of considerable use to observe the analogy there is between the course of nature, providence, and grace. There are a vast number of things in which we must needs resolve the last question, so to speak, into the sovereignty of God. Why did God see it fit to people this world so very thinly? Why does the improvement of human arts proceed so very imperfectly? Why is the chief blessing that God ever bestowed, yet unknown to a vast number of the human race? The state of a savage tribe and of a cultivated society, how do they differ in the same climate? Why was so great a part of this vast con-

tinent for so many ages a howling wilderness, a dwelling for wild beasts, and a few human creatures little less savage than they? Why is one person born into the world a slave, and another a monarch? Even with regard to morals, which are the source of the highest dignity and the highest happiness, I could suppose one born in a great but profligate family, supplied with all the means of indulgence, solicited by the worst examples, and beset by interested flatterers; and I could suppose another born of pious parents, with the most amiable example, the most careful instruction, the most regular government—why are there so vast advantages given to the one, and so hard a trial imposed on the other? Must we not say, "Even so, Father," &c. In temporal and spiritual, natural and personal circumstances, there is every where to be seen much of the sovereignty of God.

IV. The next character of God's decrees is, that they are just, and that they are holy. He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and it is the union of righteousness and holiness with the most unsearchable depth of wisdom, that gives occasion to the adoration, Rev. xiii. 8. "Great and marvellous," &c. Nothing can be more manifest, than that all the calamities which God in his providence inflicts on earth, and the future judgments which he will inflict on the ungodly, are represented as acts of justice. The only difficulty or objection that lies in the way of this, arises from the next particular, to which we will therefore proceed, viz.

V. That the decrees of God are fixed, absolute,

and unchangeable. That which he hath ordained shall certainly come to pass, and nothing can oppose it, subvert it, or take its place. Here, then, the difficulty rises full upon us; how shall we reconcile this with the free agency of the creature, with the guilt of sin, or the righteousness of the punishment of sin? yet this is affirmed by all sound divines, as in the Confession of Faith, chap. iii. § 1. "God from all eternity did by the most holy and wise counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." This subject has exercised the reason of men in all ages, so far as it has been proposed to them, but particularly that of divines. The subject is dark and intricate, as any body may easily perceive.

It is remarkable what weak things sometimes men of sense will say upon such subjects, when it seems necessary to them to say something in favour of their own hypothesis. One writer proposes to himself to reconcile this difference, and says, God foresees and predetermines actions in different ways, and each according to its own nature; that he foresees necessary actions as necessary, free actions as free, and contingent events as contingent. This is just saying nothing at all, and it had been better to have said nothing than to have said it. Every body knows, that as far as these different kinds of actions and events take place in the system, they are so ordained of God; but it behoved this author to shew

how any action could be free, or any event contingent, upon the supposition of the divine providence or decree.

Others have attempted to solve the difficulty by founding the decrees upon foreknowledge, and this upon God's distinct and perfect view of every person's disposition, and how men will determine in every circumstance in which they can be placed. But this is liable to two objections, first, That foreknowledge makes no difference as to decrees; for whether God considered the thing as a consequence of another or not, if he foresaw the consequence, he admitted and ordained that event as a part of the general system. The other objection is, that it takes for granted the system of what is called moral necessity, which brings back the same difficulty with redoubled force. It is remarkable that the advocates for necessity have adopted a distinction made use of for other purposes, and forced it into their service, I mean moral and natural necessity. They say natural or physical necessity takes away liberty, but moral necessity does not; at the same time, they explain moral necessity so as to make it truly physical or natural. That is physical necessity which is the invincible effect of the law of nature, and it is neither less natural nor less unsurmountable, if it is from the laws of spirit, than it would be if it were from the laws of matter. To see how some people are lost upon these subjects, you may observe that the great argument that men are determined by the strongest motives, is a mere equivocation, and what logicians call *petitio principii*. It is impossible even to produce any medium of proof

that it is the ſtrongeſt motive, except that it has prevailed. It is not the greateſt in itſelf, nor does it ſeem to be in all reſpects ſtrongeſt to the agent; but you ſay it appears ſtrongeſt in the mean time—Why? Becauſe you were determined by it: alas! you promiſed to prove that I was determined by the *ſtrongeſt motive*, and you have only ſhewn that I had a *motive* when I acted. But what has determined you then? can any effect be without a cauſe? I anſwer, Suppoſing my ſelf-determining power to exiſt, it is as real a cauſe of its proper and diſtinguiſhing effect, as your moral neceſſity; ſo that the matter juſt comes to a ſtand, and is but one and the ſame thing on one ſide and on the other.

But even ſuppoſe the ſyſtem of neceſſity true, the difficulty of reconciling it with the guilt of ſin, and the righteouſneſs of God's judgment, is as great as upon any ſuppoſition whatever. Others have made uſe of a metaphyſical argument to reconcile foreknowledge with liberty. They ſay, when any thing is done in time, it only ſhews the futurity of the action, as the ſchool-men ſay. It was a true propoſition from all eternity, that ſuch a thing would be done, and every truth being the object of the divine knowledge, God's foreſeeing it was no more the cauſe of it than a man's ſeeing another do a thing at a diſtance is the cauſe of its being done. But even this does not ſatisfy the mind, as the difficulty ariſes from the certainty of the event itſelf, as being inconſiſtent with the freedom of the agent, not the way in which it comes to be known.

It deſerves particular notice, that ſeveral able

writers have ſhewn, that with reſpect to the moſt difficult part of the decrees of God, all the ſeveral ſects of Chriſtians at bottom ſay the ſame thing, except that claſs of Socinians who deny the omniſcience and foreknowledge of God altogether, and they are ſo directly oppoſite to the letter of Scripture, that they deſerve no regard. The Arminians ſay, that God has decreed that all that he foreſaw would believe and repent, ſhould be ſaved; for which purpoſe all have ſufficient grace given them. But could not Omnipotence have given them effectual grace to overcome their obſtinacy? Yes, without doubt. And are there not ſome that had as obſtinate and profligate natures as thoſe that periſh, overcome by divine power? Yes, it is not eaſy to deny this—that he did not give the effectual grace to ſome, and gave it to others. So that they muſt at laſt ſay, "Even ſo, Father," &c.

It is more eaſy to ſhew that the Supralapſarians and Sublapſarians are at bottom of the ſame principle. All then have this difficulty before them—to account for the divine purpoſe conſiſtently with the guilt of ſin.

But I would go a little farther and ſay, the difficulty is the ſame in natural as it is in revealed religion, and the ſame in the courſe of nature as in both. The certainty of events makes as much againſt common diligence in the affairs of life, as againſt diligence in religion. The fates which the Stoics of old held, was called the *ignava ratio* of the Stoics.

For my own part I freely own, that I could never ſee any thing ſatisfactory in the attempts of divines

or metaphyſicians to reconcile theſe two things; but it does not appear difficult to me to believe preciſely in the form of our Confeſſion of Faith; to believe both the certainty of God's purpoſe, and the free agency of the creature. Nor does my being unable to explain theſe doctrines, form an objection againſt one or the other.

## LECTURE XIV.

### *Of the Covenant of Works, and the Fall of Man.*

THIS ſeems to be the next thing in order. That I may treat of it as conciſely as poſſible, I will make the following obſervations.

1. It is juſtly and properly by divines conſidered as a covenant. The word *covenant* is not indeed made uſe of by Moſes in giving the hiſtory of the fall, for which many reaſons may be aſſigned. The Scripture does not ſo much limit the phraſe, as fix the thing itſelf, which we now expreſs by it. The word *covenant* is uſed with latitude in Scripture. Thus, Jer. xxxiii. 20. 25. "Thus ſaith the Lord, if you can break my covenant," &c. It may be obſerved, that there muſt of neceſſity be ſome impropriety in calling any tranſaction between God and man *a covenant*, becauſe it muſt differ conſiderably from an engagement of perſons equal and free. But as far as there can be a covenant relation between God and man, it evidently took place here. The giving a ſpecial command, with a threatening annexed, does evidently imply in it ſuch a covenant.

2. It seems just and proper to suppose, that merely abstaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was not the only duty prescribed and demanded by God, but that the demand extended to universal obedience.

The Jewish Rabbies say that God gave Adam six precepts: 1. To worship God; 2. To do justice; 3. Not to shed human blood; 4. Not to make use of idols or images; 5. Not to commit rapine and fraud; 6. To avoid incest. But all this is without the least proof.

3. We may consider the choice of the command for trial, not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This may give occasion to many conjectures, and likewise to many solid remarks. It is conjectured by many, that the tree had in it a noisome quality that made the body liable to corruption, as God often orders his commands so, that obedience to them is of itself happiness, and disobedience is misery. If we suppose the eating this tree had nothing in itself either good or evil, and it is asked why God thought fit to suspend the fate of the human race on a positive precept? It may be answered, first, as an act of sovereignty, to which we have no right to object. 2. It might also be more proper for the trial of obedience, as the mere authority of God would be the sanction. 3. It was a just and natural acknowledgment that the creature held all created comforts of God. 4. There were then so few relations, that there could be no trial upon the precepts of the second table.

4. It appears that Adam, in the covenant of works, was to be considered as the federal head and

representative of the human race, as he was then the natural head. By the manner in which the human race was to descend from him, the punishment inflicted upon him must of course descend to them. If we suppose that God might justly create an order of beings like to what man is, to descend from one another, and to propagate the nature which he had, the matter could not have fallen out otherwise, in case of sin, than it did.

5. Let us consider the import of the threatening: "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." That temporal death was to be understood by it, and all the sufferings preparatory to death, must necessarily be admitted. That it supposes also spiritual death, or the separation of the soul from God, is a necessary circumstance in the whole of this matter. The expression, Gen. iii. 22. "Behold the man is become like one of us," &c. is by no means to be taken as if God was afraid they would eat of the tree of life, and thereby become immortal. The greatest part of interpreters consider these words as spoken by way of derision; and as it is also probable that this tree had much in it of a health-giving quality, it was not proper that men devoted to so many sufferings should be permitted the use of it. And as a sacrament, it was to be refused to those who had broken the covenant, and were therefore unworthy of the sign.

## *Of the Fall.*

BEFORE we speak farther of the fall of man by the breach of the covenant of works, it may be

expected that we should consider a little the introduction of sin or moral evil in general. Why did God permit sin, and the train of evils that follow it? This has been a question that has exercised inquirers from the beginning, and especially under the gospel. I have treated a little upon this in the discourse upon the decrees, and shall only further drop a few hints. Some say that it was a necessary consequence of creating free agents; but there are many objections to this. It is neither certain that it was a necessary consequence, nor that there is any such worth in the free agency of the creature as to deserve to be preserved, at the price of this evil and its train. Some have said that the evil, natural and moral, was necessary to the perfection of the whole, as the shade of a picture to the beauty of the whole piece. This is the substance of the Beltistian scheme, the foundation of which I mentioned before, with the objections against it. I shall now only add, that upon this system it is necessary to suppose that all the good, natural and moral, that the universe could possibly admit, is to be found in it. This is exceedingly difficult to believe from appearances, and it is impossible to support it without laying God himself under the chains of necessity. It is certainly infinitely preferable to take Scripture truths just as they stand: that God is infinitely holy; has testified his abhorrence to sin, and therefore cannot be the author of it; that he has notwithstanding, most justly permitted it; and that he will illustrate his own glory by it; but that the disposition of his providence and grace is to us unsearchable.

There is mention made in Scripture of the angels that ſinned; from which it appears that ſin was introduced among them. The Scriptures have not informed us of many circumſtances on this ſubject, which, as uſual, men of fertile inventions have endeavoured to ſupply by conjectures, or to determine from very ſlender evidence. Some have even preſumed to determine the number of the fallen angels, or at leaſt their proportion to thoſe that ſtood, from Rev. xii. 3, 4. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon having ſeven heads and ten horns, and ſeven crowns upon his heads, and his tail drew the third part of the ſtars of heaven, and did caſt them to the earth." But this is a miſapplication of the paſſage in that prophecy, which belongs to the viſible church on earth. Some have ſaid that the ſin of the angels was envy, ſome impiety or luſt, but the greater number pride; and this laſt ſeems to have the moſt truth in it, not becauſe we know any thing certain of the circumſtances of their rebellion, but becauſe pride or ſelf-ſufficiency ſeems to be the eſſence or ruling part of all our ſin.

We do not know the time of their fall, nor indeed with much certainty the time of their creation. We only know that their fall was before that of man; and that God paſſed by the angels that ſinned; and that they are reſerved in chains under darkneſs, to the judgment of the great day.

Some have exerciſed themſelves in conjecturing how long our firſt parents continued in the ſtate of innocence. Some ſuppoſe they fell upon the firſt day of their creation; others, that they continued

in innocence some years. There is nothing said in the book of Genesis that can determine this point with certainty, nor is it of much moment could it be determined.

Eve is said to have been tempted by the serpent, and by many passages of Scripture it is put beyond a doubt, that it was by the devil or prince of the fallen angels. It ought not to be understood allegorically. Probably he made use of this creature as the fittest form in which he could appear. Many have supposed it was one of the bright fiery serpents that are seen in Arabia, and some parts of the East, and that he appeared to Eve as an angel, which would the more easily account for the deception. If this opinion is embraced, we must however suppose that the serpent was more glorious before the fall than since in his appearance; and indeed it is probable that most, or all the creatures, were more excellent in their kind before than after the fall.

But what we are chiefly to attend to, is the consequence of the fall upon Adam and his posterity. As to themselves, they lost a great part of the image of God, in which they were created. They became the objects of divine displeasure; their eyes were opened, and they felt shame for their nakedness; were struck with the alarm of an evil conscience; were driven from the terrestrial paradise; exposed to many sufferings which were to end in death; and obliged to labour on the accursed ground. Some few of the ancients have believed that our first parents perished eternally; but that has been far from the general belief, which has been, that as the first

promise was made to them, they understood and improved it, and received consolation by it.

As to the effect of Adam's sin upon his posterity, it seems very plain that the state of corruption and wickedness which men are now in, is stated in Scripture as being the effect and punishment of Adam's first sin; upon which it will be sufficient to read the epistle to the Romans, chap. v. from the 12th verse and onward. And indeed when we consider the universality of the effects of the fall, it is not to be accounted for any other way, than from Adam's being the federal head of the human race, and they sinning in him, and falling with him in his first transgression.

The first and chief of these effects is the corruption of our nature—that man now comes into the world in a state of impurity or moral defilement. We will first consider the Scripture proof of original sin, and then say, as far as we have warrant from Scripture, what it is, and the manner of its communication.

I shall first mention the following passages of Scripture: Gen. v. 6. 21. "And God saw," &c. Psal. li. 5. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity," &c. John iii. 6. "That which is born," &c. Rom. viii. 7, 8. Eph. ii 3. "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

After considering the above passages, let me observe to you that in this, as in most subjects, the general strain of the Scripture is fully as convincing as particular passages. The universal command of making atonement; children receiving the badge of the covenant; the tenor of the promises, "I will

take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh;" the force of the Pſalmiſt David's prayer, "Create within me a clean heart;" and many others of the ſame import, but, above all, this doctrine of our Saviour, John iii. 3. "Verily, verily," &c. To all this you may add experience. The univerſal and early corruption of men in practice, is a ſtanding evidence of the impurity of their original.

What is the hiſtory of the world but the hiſtory of human guilt? and do not children, from the firſt dawn of reaſon, ſhew that they are wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge?

As to the nature of original ſin, and the tranſmiſſion of it, I think a few words may ſuffice. We certainly diſcover in mankind, not only a diſpoſition without reſtraint to commit errors of a groſs nature, but in general an attachment to, and love of the creature more than the Creator. It may not be improper here to conſider the queſtion, whether the whole nature is corrupt, ſo that whatever we do is ſin. It will be, I think, very eaſy to ſettle this point, if the meaning of the inquiry be clearly underſtood. If the ſupreme deſire of the mind, and leading principle be wrong, then every thing that is directed by it muſt have the nature of ſin.

Thoſe who repreſent it in this light, do by no means aſſert that every act in every part of it is evil; ſuch as, to ſpeak truth, to do juſtice, to ſhew mercy, which certainly an unholy man may do. Nay, I ſuppoſe even the greateſt ſinner that ever was, ſpeaks twenty true words where he ſpeaks one that is falſe. But what is meant to be aſſerted is, that every action of an unregenerate man is ei-

ſentially defective as a moral duty, becauſe flowing from a wrong principle, and tending to a wrong end. Let us ſuppoſe a man inflexibly ſober and temperate from a concern for his health, or a covetous deſire of ſparing his money, and one ſhould ſay there is no true virtue in this. It would be ridiculous to ſay, that we affirmed that ſobriety was not a virtue, or that the perſon concerned ſinned in being ſober. This will appear by expreſſing the ſentiment in another form. Every body would underſtand and approve it, if we ſhould ſay, there is no virtue at all in that miſer who ſtarves his belly, or clothes himſelf with rags, only to fill his purſe.

As to the tranſmiſſion of original ſin, the queſtion is to be ſure difficult, and we ought to be reſerved upon the ſubject. St Auguſtine ſaid it was of more conſequence to know how we are delivered from ſin by Chriſt, than how we derive it from Adam. Yet we ſhall ſay a few words on this topic. It ſeems to be agreed by the greateſt part, that the ſoul is not derived from our parents by natural generation, and yet it ſeems not reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the ſoul is created impure. Therefore it ſhould follow, that a general corruption is communicated by the body, and that there is ſo cloſe a union between the ſoul and body, that the impreſſions conveyed to us through the bodily organs, do tend to attach the affections of the ſoul to things earthly and ſenſual. If it ſhould be ſaid that the ſoul, on this ſuppoſition, muſt be united to the body as an act of puniſhment or ſeverity, I would anſwer, that the ſoul is united to the body in conſequence of an act of government, by which the

Creator decreed, that men ſhould be propagated by way of natural generation. And many have ſuppoſed, that the ſouls of all men that ever ſhall be, were created at the beginning of the world, and gradually came to the exerciſe of their powers, as the bodies came into exiſtence to which they belong.

## LECTURE XV.

*Of Sin in general, and its Demerit; and of Actual Sin, and its ſeveral Diviſions.*

OF ſin in general, and moral evil, we may obſerve, that the Scripture uniformly repreſents it to us in the moſt odious light. Of God it is ſaid, "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." It is ſaid to be that which his ſoul hates; to grieve him, to diſhonour him, and to provoke his wrath. And though we muſt exclude from our minds every thing, in theſe frequent expreſſions, that belong to human paſſions or weakneſs, the juſt and legitimate inference to be drawn from it is, the great and unſpeakable evil of ſin.

As the evil of ſin appears from every page of the ſacred oracles, ſo it alſo appears in the cleareſt manner from its effects, and the miſery that follows it. All natural evils are the fruits of ſin; all the ſufferings in the valley of terror ſhoot from it. And if we lay down the righteouſneſs of Providence as a principle, Dr Butler has ſhewn in his Analogy, that the puniſhment, and therefore the guilt of ſin, is

very great; that ſometimes very great and laſting ſufferings are the conſequence of acts one would think not the moſt atrocious. The contagion of ſin, the rage of violent paſſion, and the terror of conſcience, in ſome inſtances, all tend to prove the evil of ſin.

One can ſcarcely have a clearer idea of the evil of ſin, than by comparing the effects of piety and virtue, ſo far as our own experience has enabled us to form an idea of them, with the effects of univerſal corruption and depravity in any ſociety.

Here, perhaps, it may be proper juſt to mention the queſtion, whether it is proper to ſay there is an infinite evil in ſin? I would anſwer it thus, There is not a ſingle argument againſt it, only this, that the actions done in time by a finite creature, cannot have in them an infinite evil. But this is not the thing denied, for all the ſyſtems with one voice ſay, that it is not infinite in all reſpects, otherwiſe all ſins would be equal, which indeed it is ſaid that the Stoics anciently have held. But as far as there can be meaning to us in the expreſſion, it muſt be proper to ſay the evil of ſin is infinite; not only becauſe when we conſider the ſeveral particulars that illuſtrate the evil of it, we ſee no end to them, but becauſe ſin is properly an oppoſition to the nature, and a tranſgreſſion of the law of God. Now his nature being infinitely excellent, and the obligation on us ariſing from his infinite perfections in himſelf, his full property in, and abſolute dominion over us, being inconceivably great, I reckon that there muſt be the very ſame juſtice and propriety in ſaying

that there is an infinite evil in sin, as an infinite goodness in God.

Sin is explained in general in our Catechism to be a want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God. In this definition of sin, it is divided into sins of omission or of commission. The law of God is a perfect rule, and every deviation from it is sin, whether in the matter of the duty, or principle from which it ought to flow. An action, to be truly good, must be complete in all respects. Hence some observe, that actions truly good are equally good, because they are perfect, they completely fulfil the law, and are performed at the very time when it was required. But sins are not equally evil, some are very much aggravated in comparison of others from many circumstances easy to imagine. Let one just consider the distinction of sins, with a remark or two upon each. 1. Sins of omission and commission. We are not to suppose that sins of omission are constantly, and by their nature, less heinous than sins of commission. There are some duties so important, and the obligation to which are so strong and manifest, that the omission of them is an offence as much aggravated as any that can be named, and much more so than some sins of commission. A total and habitual neglect of God's worship, is certainly much more criminal than some rash injurious expressions, which are sins of commission. 2. Sins voluntary and involuntary. All sins may be said to be in some sense voluntary, as lying properly in the disposition of the heart and will. Some are of opinion, that original sin itself is voluntary, the corrupt bias from the corrupted

frame not taking away the liberty neceſſary to moral action, and the ſin lying in the conſent given to the ſolicitation. It is however certain, that all actual ſin ſhould be conſidered as voluntary, being ſo in its nature. But ſome ſins are ſaid to be involuntary, when they are from inattention, and ſometimes when they are the effect of long habit, ſo that they are done without deliberation and without reflection. Theſe are not any way excuſeable on that account; becauſe that want of attention is a very great ſin, and the power of habit has been contracted by acts of wickedneſs.

3. There are ſome ſins of ignorance, ſome againſt light; light in general is an aggravation of ſin. Ignorance, total and invincible, takes away all ſin; but ignorance may often be eaſily prevented; and ſometimes ignorance may be ſo circumſtanced as to aggravate ſin, as when it ariſes from an averſion and hatred to the light. This is nearly connected with the opinion of the innocence of error. There are great numbers who will needs have it, that error in judgment cannot be criminal, if the perſon is ſincerely of that opinion which he profeſſes or avows. This is called by Biſhop Warburton, the maſter prejudice of this age. But it is plain that error muſt juſt be conſidered as ignorance. To ſay that a perſon miſtakes his duty with perfect innocence, is to ſuppoſe God has not given ſufficient means of diſcovering and diſtinguiſhing truth from falſehood.

There are ſeveral other diviſions of ſins that may be introduced; ſuch as ſins in thought, in word, and in deed. Filthineſs of the fleſh and of the ſpi-

rit; occaſional and reigning ſins. But as they have little difficulty in them, ſo the explanation of them is no way neceſſary to the explaining of evangelical truth; for which reaſon I will not diſcuſs them.

There are ſome maxims in eſtimating the morality of actions, that, though generally admitted, carry ſome difficulty in them when applied univerſally; as for example, that a ſin is the more highly aggravated when it is committed with little temptation; and that a virtuous action is more laudable, when it overcomes the greateſt temptations. If we extend this to inward, as well as outward temptation, which is commonly done, it ſeems to take much from the merit of true holineſs in eminent ſaints, and to annihilate altogether the excellency of the divine holineſs. The maxim muſt therefore either be a miſtake or miſapplied. One of the contraries that flows from it is certainly true, viz. that an action is not praiſe-worthy, in proportion as the contrary is vicious. It is one of the higheſt degrees of vice to be without natural affection, and to neglect the common care of family and relations; but to take care of them, has but very little that is praiſe-worthy in it. Whenever we find difficulty in theſe things, it is but reaſoning them up to the queſtion of liberty and neceſſity, the dependence and activity of the creature, where we ſhould always ſtop ſhort, as being above our comprehenſion.

There is one thing very remarkable, that in the Scriptures the ſin of our nature is always adduced as an aggravation of our guilt; but looſe perſons in principle and in practice, are apt to produce it as an extenuation of the actual tranſgreſſion which

proceeds from it. Nor, I believe, is there any way by which men can be taken off from such views, but by a thorough work of conviction, and the power of divine grace. Therefore a minister of great piety and judgment once said to me, "No man will cordially believe the doctrine of salvation by grace, contained in our Catechism and Confession, unless he is born of God. I can shew by reason, that the fall of man, and the corruption of our nature, is contained in the Scripture. I can shew that it is entirely correspondent with the course of nature and the system of Providence. But we need hardly expect that it will be received and approved till the pride of the heart is brought down, and the sinner laid at the footstool of divine mercy."

Another remark I shall make, and this also borrowed from a friend, that every error or departure from the truth might be traced back to a want of conviction, and not having a due sense of the evil of sin. Notwithstanding all the boast of concern for moral virtue, and the repeated objection that the doctrine of salvation by grace leads to licentiousness and favours immorality, it is an unhumbled spirit that makes such persons oppose the truth. Self-righteousness is easily traced back to this; all the merit of works may be reduced to it. Had such persons a proper sense of the extent and spirituality of the law of God, they would never think of trusting in themselves that they are righteous; and did they feel the obligation upon every intelligent creature supremely to honour the living and true God, they would see the evil of refusing it, but would

never think of pleading any merit from an imperfect performance of that which is so perfectly due.

In the last place, as to the inability of man to recover himself by his own power, though I would never attempt to establish a metaphysical system of necessity, of which infidels avail themselves in opposition to all religion, nor presume to explain the influence of the Creator on the creature, yet nothing is more plain from Scripture, or better supported by daily experience, than that man by nature is in fact incapable of recovery without the power of God specially interposed. I will not call it a necessity arising from the irresistible laws of nature. I see it is not a necessity of the same kind as constraint; but I see it an impossibility such as the sinner never does overcome. A late author in Scotland thinks he has discovered the great wheel that connects the human system with the universal kingdom of God: that this race of creatures were suffered or ordained to come into existence, to be a standing monument to all other intelligences through the universe, that a rational creature once departing from his allegiance to his Creator, never could again recover it, but by his own almighty power and sovereign grace.

## LECTURE XVI.

### *Of the Covenant of Grace.*

WE now come to ſpeak of the covenant of grace. This, taking it in a large ſenſe, may be ſaid to comprehend the whole plan of ſalvation through Jeſus Chriſt. I am not to mention every thing that belongs to this ſubject; but before entering directly into the conſtitution of the covenant of grace, it will be proper to ſpeak a little of the doctrine of ſatisfaction for the guilt of a creature.

As to the firſt of theſe—Was ſatisfaction or ſome atonement neceſſary? Would it have been inconſiſtent with divine juſtice to have pardoned ſinners without it? Might not the ſovereignty and mercy of God have diſpenſed with the puniſhment of ſin, both in the ſinner and in the Surety? The agitation of this queſtion, and the zeal that is ſhewn by ſome upon it, I cannot help ſaying, ſeems to ariſe from an inward averſion to the truth itſelf of the ſatisfaction, and the conſequences that follow from it. What does it ſignify, though any one ſhould admit that God by his ſovereignty might have diſpenſed with demanding ſatisfaction, if notwithſtanding it appears in fact, that he has demanded and exacted it? "that without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion," and, "that there is no other name," &c. Whether it has been ſo ordained, becauſe to have done otherwiſe would have been inconſiſtent

with the divine perfections, or becaufe ſo it ſeemed good unto God, ſeems at leaſt an unneceſſary, if not an indecent queſtion. We have an infinite concern in what God has done, but none at all in what he might have done. On what is really difficult upon this ſubject, we may however make the few following remarks.

1. From its actually taking place as the will of God, we have good reaſon to ſay it was the wiſeſt and beſt; the rather, that we find many of the higheſt encomiums on the divine perfections, as ſhewing in this great diſpenſation his power, wiſdom, mercy, and juſtice. His wiſdom in a particular manner is often celebrated, Eph. iii. 10. Rom. xi. 33. At the ſame time it is proper to obſerve the harmony of the divine attributes; that the juſtice of God appears more awful in the ſufferings of Chriſt, than if the whole human race had been devoted to perdition; and his mercy more aſtoniſhing and more amiable in the gift of his Son, than it could have been in the total remiſſion of all ſin without any ſatisfaction, had it been poſſible.

2. There is a particular proof of the neceſſity of ſatisfaction that ariſes from the death of Chriſt, conſidered as intimately united with the divine nature, which it has been already proved that he poſſeſſed. Can we ſuppoſe that ſuch a meaſure would have been taken, if it had not been neceſſary? Can we ſuppoſe that the eternal Son of God would have humbled himſelf thus, and been expoſed to ſuch a degree of temptation, and ſuch amazing ſufferings, if it had not been neceſſary?

3. All the accounts given us in Scripture of the nature of God, his perfections and government, confirm this ſuppoſition. The infinite juſtice and holineſs of his nature are often mentioned in Scripture; that he hates ſin, and cannot look upon it but with abhorrence, and particularly that he will by no means ſpare the guilty. It is ſometimes objected here, that juſtice differs from other attributes, and that its claims may be remitted, being due only to the perſon offended. But this, which applies in part to man, cannot at all be applied to God. I ſay it applies in part to man, becauſe a matter of private right, independent of the public good, he may eaſily paſs by. But it is not ſo with magiſtrates or public perſons, nor even with private perſons, when they take in the conſideration of the whole. Beſides, when we conſider the controverſy about the juſtice of God, and what it implies, we ſhall ſee the greateſt reaſon to ſuppoſe what is called his vindictive juſtice, viz. a diſpoſition to puniſh ſin becauſe it truly merits it, even independently of any conſequence of the puniſhment, either for the reformation of the perſon, or as an example to others. The idea of juſtice and guilt carries this in it, and if it did not, there would be an apparent iniquity in puniſhing any perſon for a purpoſe different from his own good.

II. The ſecond queſtion upon the ſatisfaction is, whether it was juſt and proper to admit the ſubſtitution of an innocent perſon in the room of the guilty. This is what the Socinians combat with all their might. They ſay it is contrary to juſtice to puniſh an innocent perſon; that God muſt al-

ways treat things as they really are, and therefore can never reckon it any proper atonement for sin, to punish one that never committed any sin. Before I state the reasoning in support of this fundamental doctrine of the gospel, I will first briefly point out the qualifications necessary in such a substitution. 1. The security undertaking must be willing: it would certainly be contrary to justice, to lay a punishment upon an innocent person without his consent. 2. He must be free and independent, having a right over his own life, so that he is not accountable to any other for the disposal of it. 3. The person having the demand must be satisfied and contented with the substitution, instead of personal punishment. 4. That the surety be truly able to make satisfaction in full. 5. That it be in all respects as useful, and that the sufferer be not lost to the Public. 6. Some add, that he be related to, and of the same nature with the guilty. This is generally added from the constitution of Christ's person, and in that instance surely has a great degree of suitableness, but does not seem to me to be so necessary as the other particulars for establishing the general principle.

Now supposing all these circumstances, vicarious satisfaction for sin seems to me easily and perfectly justifiable. To make this appear, attend to the three following observations.

1. There is nothing in it at all contrary to justice. If any innocent person were punished against his will, or laid under a necessity of suffering for the cause of another, it would evidently be repugnant to the idea of justice. But when it is done, as by

the ſuppoſition, willingly and freely, injuſtice is wholly excluded. If we could indeed ſuppoſe ignorance and raſhneſs in the undertaking, ſo that he conſented to what he did not underſtand, there would be injuſtice, but this alſo is wholly excluded in the caſe before us.

2. There is nothing in it contrary to utility, becauſe it has preciſely the ſame effect in demonſtrating the evil of ſin in the one caſe as in the other. In any human government, it certainly ſerves as much to ratify the law, and in many caſes the exacting the debt with rigour of a ſurety, is a more awful ſanction to the law than even the ſatisfaction of the offending party. We have not in all hiſtory, I think, an inſtance of this kind ſo ſtriking as the lawgiver of the Locrians, who had made a law that adultery ſhould be puniſhed with the loſs of both the eyes. His own ſon was ſhortly after convicted of the crime; and, to fulfil the law, he ſuffered one of his own eyes to be put out, and one of his ſons. Every body muſt perceive, that ſuch an example was a greater terror to others, than if the law had been literally inflicted on the offender. After having mentioned theſe two particulars, I obſerve, that the thing is in a moſt preciſe and exact manner laid down in Scripture. It is impoſſible to invent expreſſions that are either more ſtrong or more definite than are there to be found. It is an obſervation of ſome of the Socinian writers, that the word *ſatisfaction* is not to be found in Scripture, and in this they often triumph; but nothing can be more ridiculous, for ſatisfaction is a modern term of art, and unknown in that ſenſe to antiquity.

But can there be any thing more plain, than that it is intended to expreſs the very meaning ſo fully and ſo variouſly expreſſed, both in the Scriptures and the heathen writers? The word in the Old Teſtament moſt frequently uſed is *atoning*, making atonement for ſin, or for the ſoul. What could be more plain than not only the great day of atonement, but the daily ſacrifice, in which certain men were appointed to repreſent the people of Iſrael, and lay their hands on the head of the devoted beaſt, and confeſs the ſins of the people, which had not any other intelligible meaning, than the transferring the guilt from the ſinner to the victim? The ſprinkling the blood in the Old Teſtament upon the horns of the altar, whence by alluſion the blood of Chriſt is called the blood of ſprinkling, carries this truth in it in the plaineſt manner; and the prophecies of Iſaiah, chap. liii. 5. "He was wounded for our tranſgreſſion," &c. "When he ſhall give his ſoul an offering for ſin," &c. But were there the leaſt obſcurity in the type, the truth as ſtated in the New Teſtament would put the matter out of all doubt. The expreſſions are ſo many that we cannot, and we need not enumerate them all: "Redeemed—bought with a price—redeemed not with corruptible things, as ſilver or gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt—This is my blood ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins—he gave himſelf a ranſom for all—unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood."

I would juſt add here, that as by the conſtitution of our nature, and our being made to deſcend in a certain ſucceſſion by natural generation, there is a

communication of guilt and impurity from Adam, ſo we have in human ſociety, and indeed inſeparable from it, the idea of communication by natural relation, of honour and ſhame, happineſs and miſery, as well as the cleareſt notion of voluntary ſubſtitution. We ſee that the worth and eminent qualities of any perſon, give luſtre and dignity to his poſterity; and wickedneſs or baſeneſs does juſt the contrary. We ſee that men may eaſily, and do neceſſarily receive much pleaſure from the happineſs of their relations, and miſery in ſympathy with their ſufferings. And as to voluntary ſubſtitution, it is as familiar to us as any tranſaction in ſocial life. It is true, there are not many inſtances of men's being bound in their life for one another; for which ſeveral good reaſons may be aſſigned. There are not many men of ſuch exalted generoſity, as to be willing to forfeit life for life. It is rarely that this would be a proper or adequate ſatisfaction to the law, and it would not be the intereſt of human ſociety commonly to receive it. Yet the thing is far from being inhuman or unpractiſed. There are ſome inſtances in ancient times, in which men have procured liberty for their friends, by being confined in their room. And both in ancient and modern times, hoſtages delivered by nations, or public ſocieties, are obliged to abide the puniſhment due to their conſtituents.

3. The third queſtion on the ſubject of ſatisfaction is, Whether it was neceſſary that the Redeemer or Mediator ſhould be a divine perſon? It may be aſked, whether an angel of the higheſt order, who was perfectly innocent, might not have made ſatis-

faction for the sins of men? Perhaps this is one of the many questions in theology that are unnecessary or improper. It is sufficient to say that it appears either to have been necessary or best, that one truly divine should make satisfaction for sin, since it has been ordained of God, who does nothing unnecessary.

But besides this, it seems to be consonant to other parts of revealed religion, particularly the infinite evil of sin as committed against God, for which no finite being seems sufficient to atone. To which we may add, that all finite, dependent, created beings, are under such obligations themselves, that it is not easy to see what they can do in obedience to the will of God, which can have any merit in it, or which they would not be obliged to do for the purpose of his glory at any time; neither does any created being seem so much his own master, as to enter into any such undertaking.

There is an objection made to this doctrine, sometimes to the following purpose:—How could the second person of the ever blessed Trinity be said to make satisfaction? Was he not equally offended with the other? Could he make satisfaction to himself? But this objection is easily solved; for not to mention that we cannot transfer with safety every thing human to God, the thing in question is by no means unknown in human affairs. Though for the payment of a debt on which the creditor insists, it would be ridiculous to say that he might pay himself; yet in the character of a magistrate sitting to judge a criminal where he represents the Public, it is no way unsuitable for him to put off the public

perſon, and ſatisfy the demands of juſtice, and preſerve the honour of the law.

Here I would conclude by juſt obſerving, that there is no neceſſity of a ſurety's doing juſt the ſame thing in kind that the guilty perſon was bound to do. The character and dignity of the ſurety may operate ſo far as to produce the legal effect, and make the ſatisfaction proper for giving its due honour to the law. Thus, in the ſufferings of Chriſt, the infinite value of the Sufferer's perſon makes the ſufferings to be conſidered as a juſt equivalent to the eternal ſufferings of a finite creature.

## LECTURE XVII.

LET us proceed to the conſtitution of the covenant; and you may obſerve that there is ſome difference among orthodox divines as to the way of ſtating the parties, and the terms of the covenant of grace. There ſeems to be mention made in Scripture of a covenant or agreement between the Father and the Son. This the generality of Calviniſt divines conſider as a ſeparate or preparatory contract, and call it the covenant of redemption. Some, however, eſpecially thoſe who have been termed Antinomians, conſider this as properly the covenant of grace, made with Chriſt the ſecond Adam, as repreſenting his ſpiritual ſeed, and the covenant ſaid to be made with believers, to be only the execution or adminiſtration of that covenant, and therefore called a teſtament, being the fruits of Chriſt's death, or ratified by the death of the Teſtator. According

to the different ways of viewing this matter, they expreſs themſelves differently: the firſt ſaying that the condition of the covenant of grace is faith in Jeſus Chriſt; and the other ſaying it is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. I do not apprehend there need be any difference between thoſe now mentioned, and I obſerve Mr Williſon in his Catechiſm takes it both ways. I ſhall firſt very ſhortly ſhew you from Scripture, that there is plainly mention made of a covenant, or a tranſaction between the Father and the Son, which, if diſtinct from the covenant of grace, may be properly enough called the covenant of redemption.

There are many promiſes made directly to the Mediator reſpecting this matter: Pſal. ii. 6. "I declare the decree," &c. Iſa. v. 3. 10. "When he ſhall make his ſoul," &c. Iſa. xlii. 1. 6, 7. "Behold my ſervant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. I the Lord have called thee in righteouſneſs, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." Zech. vi. 13. "And the council of peace ſhall be between them both." I only further mention Pſal. xl. 6, 7, 8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire," &c. The truth is, that not only the Socinians, who are enemies to the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, but even the Arminians decline the admiſſion of this truth, and attempt to explain away the above texts; yet ſomething equivalent to it is neceſſarily conſequent upon Chriſt's undertaking. When he was conſtituted Mediator

by the divine decree, he must have assented to it, and freely undertaken the important charge. It is also evidently the spirit of the New Testament dispensation, that the hope and strength of believers are in Christ. He is said to have ascended up on high, and received gifts for men, and of his fulness we are said by the apostle John to receive grace for grace.

But the covenant of grace is said to be more frequently made with men, with the house of Israel, with the chosen of God, with his people. It is a compact or agreement between God and elect sinners, to give freely, and of mere mercy, Christ to die for them, and with him a pardon of sin, and a right to everlasting life, together with the Spirit of sanctification to make them meet for it; all which the believer receives and accepts in the manner in which it is offered, and rests his eternal state upon it. This transaction has many different titles given it in Scripture. It is called the *covenant of grace*, which is properly the theological phrase; a *covenant*, because it is often called so in the Old Testament and in the New, and *of grace*, because it is so often repeated in both, that salvation is of grace; and particularly in order to state the opposition between it and the covenant of works. It is also called a covenant of peace, and that with a double view: to distinguish it from the covenant of works, and from the covenant on Sinai at the giving of the law. It is called likewise an everlasting covenant, to distinguish it from any temporary covenant. It is also

called the *promise*, and the promise made of God unto our fathers.

In what I shall further offer upon it, it is my design, 1. To consider the constitution of the covenant, in its promises and conditions. 2. The various dispensations of it, and their relations to one another. 3. In what manner the gospel is to be preached agreeably to it, and what views of things are contrary to it.

As to the constitution of the covenant, you see the first and leading idea of it is, free and unmerited mercy; that sinners had deserved to perish; that divine justice pronounced their condemnation. This must lie at the foundation of the whole. It was for this reason that a Mediator was provided, and the Saviour is offered by God himself, as the fruit of his love: John iii. 16. "God so loved the world," &c. The freeness of salvation in the gospel is largely insisted on, and proved by the apostle in his epistle to the Romans, and particularly chap. iv. 16. speaking of the covenant under the title of the law of faith, he says, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace." This covenant is established by a Mediator, for every blessing comes to believers through Christ and for his sake, who is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The promises of the covenant of grace may be taken in either view, more generally or more particularly. In general it procures deliverance from the wrath of God, and from every part of the curse of a broken law. Some also distinguish the promises generally into grace and glory, peace with God, holiness on earth, and the enjoyment of

God at last. But that I may state them in the way most proper for preaching the gospel, and carrying the message of peace, I shall enumerate them in the following order.—

1. The covenant promises Christ the Mediator to make satisfaction to divine justice by his sufferings and death. He was the promise made of God unto the fathers, and under the obscurity of the ancient dispensation, he was the hope of Israel, and the desire of all nations; and when he was come into the world, he was called the Lord's Christ, and the salvation of God. So Simeon expressed himself, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," &c. And as the Redeemer appeared first as the object of faith to the ancient patriarchs, so to convinced sinners under the gospel, a Saviour is the first ground of consolation.

2. The covenant promises the full and free pardon of all sin through Christ, John i. 16. Isa. lv. 1. The forgiveness of sins is the doctrine which Christ commanded his disciples to preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, 1 Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying," &c. The universality of the offer of mercy is what particularly distinguishes it, Matt. xi. 28. "Come unto me—and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out," &c. This seems to be indeed the preliminary mercy, that opens the way to every other, and it was in this view that the gospel was preached to the humble and needy: Luke iv. 18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," &c.

3. The covenant promises the spirit of sanctification to renew our nature, and form us for the service

of God, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Jer. xxxii. 40. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them," &c. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you," &c. It is with a view to this that we are told, Acts v. 31. "That Christ was exalted," &c. I need not multiply passages to this purpose, for it is the constant testimony of the Scriptures, that any gracious disposition in believers is the work of God's holy Spirit, and therefore are they called the fruit of the Spirit. It is not only the bringing sinners again to God by repentance that is considered as the work of God's Spirit, but the continuance and increase of sanctification is attributed to their being an habitation of God through the Spirit: "I will live in them, and walk in them," &c.

4. The covenant promises the favour of God, and all its happy fruits, while in this life, 2 Cor. vi. 18. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," &c. I need not here mention the particulars that fall under this head—deliverance from temptations, support under sufferings, the sanctified use of sufferings; because we are in one word assured that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," and 1 Cor. iii. 22. "For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos," &c.

5. In the last place, the covenant promises eternal life. We cannot say what would have been the fulness of that life which belonged to the first covenant; but it seems to be generally agreed, that the promise of a glorious immortality, contained in the gospel, is much greater and more valuable, than

that which was loſt by the fall. Life and immortality are ſaid to be brought to light by the goſpel; and our Saviour is ſaid to have entered into the holieſt of all, as the firſt fruits of them that ſlept, and to have gone to prepare a place for them, that where he is, there they may be alſo.

Let us now ſpeak of the conditions of the covenant of grace. As I hinted before, thoſe who make the covenant of grace and covenant of redemption the ſame thing, ſay, the condition is Chriſt's perfect merit and obedience. Neither indeed is there any thing elſe that can be called the meritorious condition. Thoſe who ſay that the covenant of grace was made with man, ſay that the condition is faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And it is undoubtedly true, that faith intereſts us in Chriſt, and brings us really within the bond of the covenant. Faith alone brings us to it; for any thing elſe that might be conſidered as a condition, is only a promiſe of what God will do for his people. But to ſtate this matter as clearly as I am able, whether there are conditions or not, or what are the conditions of the covenant of grace, depends entirely on the ſenſe in which we take the word *condition*. If we take it as implying proper merit, or the plea or claim in juſtice for obtaining the promiſes, nothing can be plainer than that there is not, and cannot be of this kind, any condition but the voluntary, perfect, meritorious obedience of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. If we take it as ſignifying any particular duty or performance; as the term on which the promiſe is ſuſpended, as in the firſt covenant abſtaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it can ſcarcely

be said with propriety that it has a condition; for the tenor of the covenant, in its promising part, is such, that every thing of this kind is promised as the work of God. Therefore many divines have asserted, that the gospel, strictly so called, has no condition, but consists wholly of free and gracious promises. (See this matter well stated in Witsius' Economy of the Covenants.) It is for this reason that it is often called a *testament*, even where we have it translated *covenant*.

But if condition is taken to signify a character, qualification, or what is necessary to fit us for everlasting life, then faith, repentance, new obedience, and final perseverance, are all conditions, but very improperly so called. Indeed, in this sense, the covenant of grace has as many conditions as the law has duties. Yet even in this view we are carefully to observe, that there is a difference in the constitution of the covenant of grace, between faith in the blood of the atonement, and its fruits, the various graces of the Christian life. For as the promises of the covenant contain, not only the free pardon of sin for Christ's sake, but also the spirit of sanctification, faith is the immediate instrument for receiving or laying hold of this mercy. If there is to man, properly speaking, a condition of the covenant, it must be faith, because this, renouncing all self-dependence, accepts and closes with the promise of recovery and salvation, just in the manner in which it is offered, freely, without money and without price. It is plainly stated in this manner in the epistle to the Romans: "Therefore it is by faith, that it may be by grace." "To him that worketh is the re-

ward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." Faith indeed is highly proper for receiving the righteousness of Christ, because it gives the glory only to God. To suppose faith has any merit in it, is just as absurd as to suppose that a person, being wholly needy and helpless, his accepting the bounty of another is an evidence of his having abundance of his own.

As to the fruits of faith, or works of righteousness, no person can deny that they are the proper evidence of our relation to God; that they are the expressions of our love to him; that they are necessary to form us for his service, and fit us for his presence: but being the work of his Holy Spirit, and the accomplishment of his faithful promise, it is impossible that they should be, in any respect, conditions of the covenant of grace.

The promises of the covenant of grace are ranged in a certain order; they introduce and lead to one another; and they are to be received and applied precisely in the same order: Christ the Saviour, the free pardon of sin, a new nature as the work of his Spirit, increase of grace, a sanctified providence, victory over death, and the possession of everlasting life. These must take place just in the order I have mentioned them. If the order is inverted, the system is destroyed.

2. The second thing to be considered, is the various dispensations of the covenant, and their relation to one another. The covenant of grace in every dispensation differs from the covenant of works.

The covenant of works required perfect obedience, and one sin rendered it void. In the covenant of grace there is provision made, not only for reconciling the sinner, but for daily pardon to the believer. In the covenant of works every thing depends upon the personal conduct of the interested party; in the covenant of grace there is a Mediator who lays his hands upon them both.

As to the dispensations of the covenant of grace, we may consider them as appearing before the law, under the law, and from the coming of Christ.

(1.) Before giving the law, we see the promise is made in the following terms: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" and to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." I think the promise, if not the covenant, was substantially made the same then as now. The apostle to the Galatians, iii. 17. thought the same thing, that the promise to Abraham was the New Testament promise, and that whatever the law had peculiar to itself, was posterior to the promise, "And this I say, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ," &c. The promise at that time, as now, was eternal life, as the apostle to the Hebrews plainly proves, Heb. xi. 13. "These all died in faith," &c. It is also plain, I think, that as the promise to the faith of the ancient patriarchs was in substance the same with ours, so their faith itself was also the same. It was a reliance on the mercy of God. It was that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for.

(2.) Under the law the covenant also was the

ſame in ſubſtance, as appears by the arguments juſt now hinted at. The only thing particular is to conſider what was the import of the Sinai covenant, or the deſign of giving the law of Moſes. Some, ſeeing that the Levitical law conſiſts chiefly of temporal promiſes, are for ſuppoſing that diſpenſation quite diſtinct from the covenant of grace. They have even called the ten commandments given upon Mount Sinai, a republication of the law of nature, and of the covenant of works. A late celebrated writer, Dr Warburton, attempted to ſhew that Moſes did not in the law give them any reaſon to expect eternal life, but confined both the promiſes and threatenings entirely to things temporal. Even to this author, probably, many have imputed more than he intended to affirm. Yet he certainly carries his arguments too far in ſuppoſing, that in none of the inſpired writers of the Old Teſtament is eternal life propoſed as the object of faith. This may be eaſily refuted; and indeed is in the book of Job ſo ſtrongly refuted, that the author is forced into the extraordinary ſuppoſition of that book being as late as the Babyloniſh captivity, in order to rid himſelf of it. However, I think that it muſt be admitted, that temporal promiſes and threatenings make the moſt diſtinguiſhed appearance in the Levitical law. This took place becauſe it was deſigned as a typical diſpenſation, and to be a ſhadow of good things to come. It is plain, however, that the law of Moſes did not provide an atonement for every crime, and ſuppoſed many ſins which could not be expiated by the blood of bulls or of goats, for which the only

remedy was reliance on the mere mercy of God, in the exercise of true repentance; see Isa. i. 16, &c. lv. 1. "Ho! every one that thirsteth," &c.

The New Testament expressly tells us, that the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and the innumerable persons, and things, and ordinances, that were typical in it, need not be mentioned. The land of Canaan itself, and all the temporal promises preparatory to it, or in consequence of the possession of it, had a reference to the spiritual promises under the gospel, and doubtless the acceptance and salvation of them under the law, are upon the footing of the everlasting covenant, which began to be delivered before the law was given, and will continue till the final consummation of all things.

The moral law published upon Mount Sinai, must not be considered as a republication of the covenant of works, but a publication or summary of that immutable law of righteousness, which is the duty of creatures, and must accompany the administration of every covenant which God makes with man.

3. Since the coming of Christ, the covenant of grace is administered in a manner more full, clear, and efficacious, than in any of the former states. It was formerly administered in the name of, and by a promised Saviour; it is now administered in the name of, and by a risen Redeemer, who once suffered and now reigns in glory. The harmony of all the divine perfections in the great salvation, is more apparent now than formerly, and the preaching of the glad tidings of peace to sinners, is more explicit and more universal. What falls chiefly to

be conſidered is, how far the former diſpenſations are ſuſpended or abrogated by the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh. The covenant ratified by the death of Chriſt is called a new covenant, in oppoſition to that which is old and vaniſhed away. Certainly the covenant is called new, in oppoſition to the covenant of works, as the way of ſalvation was abrogated from the date of the firſt promiſe, and both in the epiſtles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, eſpecially the two former, the goſpel or law of grace is oppoſed to the law of works, meaning the firſt covenant. And that I may ſatisfy you of this, without entering into the endleſs criticiſms upon particular paſſages, obſerve, that thoſe who would by the law, underſtand the law of Moſes, excluſive of the covenant of works, may be eaſily confuted, for the apoſtle ſays, "that it is by faith, that it may be by grace;" that if juſtification was by works, Abraham might have whereof to glory; and that the deſign of this conſtitution was, that no fleſh might glory in God's preſence. The ceremonial law is undoubtedly abrogated, both from the expreſs declaration of Scripture, and from the nature and reaſon of things. Chriſt is now the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth. And as the whole ſyſtem of the Moſaic law was intended to typify the goſpel diſpenſation when Chriſt was actually come in the fleſh, it muſt fall of itſelf as unneceſſary or hurtful.

There has been much controverſy, whether it was proper to ſay that the moral law was abrogated, or to apply to that law what is ſaid of believers not being under the law but under grace. This matter,

one would think, might be eaſily reconciled; for doubtleſs the moral law, as a covenant of works, carrying a ſentence of condemnation againſt every tranſgreſſion, is abrogated. But the moral law, as the unalterable rule of duty to creatures, is antecedent to all covenants, and cannot be affected by them. The moral law, as it requires obedience to the will, and conformity to the nature of God, was binding on the angels before the creation of the world, and will be the duty of holy angels and redeemed ſinners after the reſurrection. But there is alſo another view of this ſubject—that the moral law is a part of the covenant of grace, in the hand of the Mediator. It is the promiſe of the covenant, that the law ſhall be written in our hearts; an unfeigned faith implies the acceptance of this as well as other promiſes, ſo that the believer not only remains under his original unchangeable obligation to keep the law, but comes under a new and peculiar obligation, which is to be diſcharged in his Redeemer's ſtrength; ſo that, to take the thing properly, there is more obedience in the covenant of grace than in the covenant of works. The covenant of grace requires unfeigned ſubjection to every part of the ſame law, with this mortifying addition, that the believer receives it wholly as a condition of his acceptance, and aſcribes it entirely to the riches of divine grace.

There is ſometimes mention made of the political law of Moſes, and it is demanded whether this is of perpetual obligation? The anſwer ſeems to be eaſy. It contains an excellent ſyſtem of laws ſuited to the ſettlement of the Jews in Canaan, and many

principles of equity that may be of great use to other legislators; but as the civil laws in general have only in view temporal property and convenience, they certainly are not unalterable, because they must be suited to the state of society, and other circumstances which may be very various. Sundry of the precepts also in the political law seem to have an allegorical meaning, and to have been made either with a view of suggesting or strengthening moral principles, or to be typical of gospel times; as the precept, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," "Thou shalt not seethe the kid in its mother's milk." But we may observe, that the principles laid down in the criminal law are founded upon so much wisdom, that it is a question whether the departure from them in punishing of crimes has ever been attended with advantage: as for example, in regard to violence, the law of retaliation, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; in theft and fraud, restitution; and the punishment of adultery with death.

What remains upon this subject, is only to point out in what manner the gospel is to be preached agreeably to it, and what views of things are contrary to it. To set this matter before you with as much distinctness and propriety as I am able, observe, that this gracious dispensation must be opened and pressed just as it is suited to the various conditions of those to whom it is addressed. These I shall divide into three great classes: 1. Secure or self-righteous persons. 2. Convinced sinners. 3. Professing believers.

1. Secure or self-righteous persons, who do not seem to have ever laid their eternal concerns to heart, or are building on some false foundation, as a form of godliness, or the merit of good works, or the comparative smallness of the sins of which they are guilty. To these it is necessary to preach the law in all its extent, and in all the force of its obligation. It is necessary to point out the evil of sin, the lost state of man by nature, and the absolute necessity of pardon through the blood of Christ, and renovation by his Spirit. It may be very proper for them and all others, to shew them the guilt and folly of particular sins, such as swearing, drunkenness, uncleanness. But if something more is not done, the evil is not searched to the bottom; for we ought to shew them that these are but the fruits of an unrenewed nature; that restraining, moderating, or even reforming a particular sin, is not enough, nor any evidence of a change from sin unto God. It is particularly proper in such cases to point out the extent and spirituality of the law, as reaching to the thoughts of the heart, so as, if possible, to shew them that they are guilty and helpless, and that there is no salvation in any but in Christ. This leads us to say,

2. That with regard to convinced sinners, it is particularly necessary to set before them the all-sufficiency of Christ, the fulness and freeness of that salvation which he purchased upon the cross, and offers in his word. To shew them that he has finished his work, and done every thing necessary to render it perfectly consistent with the justice and holiness of God to forgive even the chief of sinners.

But this will be beſt illuſtrated by pointing out ſome ſentiments and views contrary to the freeneſs of ſalvation, and the plan of the goſpel.

(1.) It is contrary to the freeneſs of ſalvation and to the covenant of grace, to extenuate ſin, to have hard thoughts of God, of the ſtrictneſs of his law, or the ſeverity of its ſanction. This ariſes from imperfect conviction of ſin, which ſometimes makes the ſinner uſe ſome efforts to obtain ſalvation; but ſtill he is apt to think he would have very hard meaſures if he was rejected. Imperfect convictions lead ſinners to ſeek their comfort from the extenuation of ſin, but true faith incites the ſinner to give full force to the accuſation, and to plead the benefit of the remiſſion.

(2.) It is contrary to the freeneſs of ſalvation and to the tenor of the covenant of grace, to think that the greatneſs or atrociouſneſs of ſin ſhould hinder our returning to God for obtaining mercy. This is one of the firſt reflections of a ſinner under conviction, that he has ſinned more than any other, and that another can ſooner expect forgiveneſs than he. While this only ſerves to increaſe humiliation, and raſe to the foundation every degree of ſelf-confidence, its operation is ſalutary. But ſometimes this ariſes from too rooted an adherence to ſome degree of human merit, as neceſſary to find favour with God, and then inſtead of compelling the ſinner to reſt in the infinite compaſſion of God, it makes him fall upon ſome ſcheme of purchaſing ſalvation for himſelf; or if he finds this impracticable, perhaps he is plunged into the gulf of deſpair. In oppoſition to this, the new and well-ordered covenant

fends him to the infinite fulnefs of Chrift for a free and complete pardon, and for deliverance from the power of his corruptions.

3. It is contrary to the freenefs of falvation and the covenant of grace, to have any dependence on one's being comparatively lefs wicked than another. If the finner's hope arifes much from his having been free from this or that fin, he is refting on a legal foundation. This was a rock of perdition to the Pharifees. See how the Saviour has oppofed this character to the other, Luke xviii. 11. "The Pharifee ftood and prayed," &c. Not that God would repreſent it as a lefs fafe ſtate to attend to the exercifes of religion, than to be an adulterer. But when men reft their dependence on their comparative goodnefs in themfelves, it only ferves to lead them away from an eſteem and acceptance of divine mercy. On this account our Saviour fays to the Pharifees, Matt. xxi. 31. "Verily I fay unto you, the Publicans," &c. The fight of a great profligate deadens the fenfe of fin in the minds of many worldly perfons, but in an humble penitent it only excites him to reflect upon the great principles of all fin in his own heart, and what he might have been, had not a reftraining Providence and recovering grace been his preſervation.

4. It is contrary to the freenefs of falvation and the covenant of grace, to fuppofe that we may not, or muft not lay hold of divine mercy, till we have done fomething ourfelves in the way of duty and performance; till our penitential tears, or purpofes of obedience, or begun reformation, entitle us to call it ours. No doubt felf-denial, and experience

of the treachery of our own hearts, ſhould fill us with humility and jealouſy of ourſelves; but the true way to reconcile the heart to duty, and to break the power of ſin, is to reſt our hope upon divine mercy for pardon, and on the promiſe in the covenant of the Holy Spirit to ſanctify us wholly. Many retard their reformation, as well as obſtruct their comfort, by yielding to a ſpirit of bondage and ſlaviſh fear. We ſhould rather pray in the words of Zechariah, Luke i. 74. "That we being delivered," &c.

5. It is contrary to the freeneſs of ſalvation and the covenant of grace, to boaſt of our own righteouſneſs, or in any degree to truſt in our own ſtrength. The motto of a Chriſtian ſhould be in the words of the prophet, Iſa. xlv. 24. "Surely, ſhall one ſay," &c. It is not merely the pardon of ſin, but the ſanctification of the nature, and ſtrength for daily obedience, that is promiſed in the covenant; and both muſt be received from the Mediator's hand, and aſcribed to him as their proper ſource. It is an admirable expreſſion of the apoſtle Paul, who ſays, "I obtained mercy to be faithful;" accounting that a ſubject of gratitude, and a mercy received, which others would have reckoned an occaſion of boaſting. Nothing is more contrary to the ſpirit of the goſpel than ſelf-dependence, and indeed the whole ſubſtance of this diſpenſation has been deſigned to abaſe the pride of man, and to exalt the grace of God.

To profeſſing believers, the whole duties of the law of God are to be preached, for believers are not without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt.

The laws of the gospel are to be inculcated as the fruits of faith, and the evidence of a saving change. There is a great difference between considering duties as going before, and as following faith and reconciliation; the first is legal, the last evangelical. You need not be afraid but that duties may be preached as strictly in the last way as in the first, and it will certainly be done with much greater safety.

# LETTERS

ON

# EDUCATION.

# LETTERS

ON

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## LETTER I.

AFTER so long a delay, I now set myself to fulfil my promise of writing to you a few thoughts on the education of children. Though I cannot wholly purge myself of the crimes of laziness and procrastination, yet I do assure you, what contributed not a little to its being hitherto not done, was, that I considered it not as an ordinary letter, but what deserved to be carefully meditated on, and thoroughly digested. The concern you show on this subject is highly commendable; for there is no part of your duty, as a Christian or a citizen, which will be of greater service to the Public, or a source of greater comfort to yourself.

The consequence of my thinking so long upon it, before committing my thoughts to paper, will pro-

bably be the taking the thing in a greater compaſs than either of us at firſt intended, and writing a ſeries of letters inſtead of one. With this view I begin with a preliminary to the ſucceſsful education of children, viz. that huſband and wife ought to be entirely one upon this ſubject, not only agreed as to the end, but as to the means to be uſed, and the plan to be followed in order to attain it. It ought to encourage you to proceed in your deſign, that I am perſuaded you will not only meet with no oppoſition to a rational and ſerious education of your children, but great aſſiſtance from Mrs S———.

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The eraſed lines contained a compliment, written with great ſincerity; but recollecting that there are no rules yet ſettled for diſtinguiſhing true compliment from flattery, I have blotted them out; on which, perhaps, you will ſay to yourſelf, 'He is fulfilling the character which his enemies give him, who ſay, it is the nature of the man to deal much more in ſatire than in panegyric.' However, I content myſelf with repeating, that certainly huſband and wife ought to conſpire and co-operate in every thing relating to the education of their children; and if their opinions happen, in any particular, to be different, they ought to examine and ſettle the matter privately by themſelves, that not the leaſt oppoſition may appear either to children or ſervants. When this is the caſe, every thing is enforced by a double authority, and recommended by a double example; but when it is otherwiſe, the pains taken are commonly more than loſt, not being able to

do any good, and certainly producing very much evil.

Be pleaſed to remember, that this is by no means intended againſt thoſe unhappy couples, who, being eſſentially different in principles and character, live in a ſtate of continual war. It is of little advantage to ſpeak either to, or of ſuch perſons. But even differences incomparably ſmaller are of very bad conſequence: when one, for example, thinks a child may be carried out, and the other thinks it is wrong; when one thinks a way of ſpeaking is dangerous, and the other is poſitive there is nothing in it. The things themſelves may indeed be of little moment, but the want of concurrence in the parents, or the want of mutual eſteem and deference, eaſily obſerved even by very young children, is of the greateſt importance.

As you and I have chiefly in view the religious education of children, I take it to be an excellent preliminary, that parental affection ſhould be purified by the principles, and controuled or directed by the precepts of religion. A parent ſhould rejoice in his children, as they are the gift of a gracious God; ſhould put his truſt in the care of an indulgent Providence, for the preſervation of his offspring as well as himſelf; ſhould be ſupremely deſirous that they may be, in due time, the heirs of eternal life; and, as he knows the abſolute dependence of every creature upon the will of God, ſhould be ready to reſign them at what time his Creator ſhall ſee proper to demand them. This happy qualification of parental tenderneſs, will have a powerful influence in preventing miſtakes in the conduct of

education. It will be the moſt powerful of all incitements to duty, and at the ſame time a reſtraint upon that natural fondneſs and indulgence which, by a ſort of faſcination or fatality, makes parents often do or permit what their judgment condemns, and then excuſe themſelves by ſaying, that no doubt it is wrong, but truly they cannot help it.

Another preliminary to the proper education of children is, a firm perſuaſion of the benefit of it, and the probable, at leaſt, if not certain ſucceſs of it, when faithfully and prudently conducted. This puts an edge upon the ſpirit, and enables the Chriſtian not only to make ſome attempts, but to perſevere with patience and diligence. I know not a common ſaying either more falſe or pernicious, than "that the children of good men are as bad as others." This ſaying carries in it a ſuppoſition, that whereas the force of education is confeſſed with reſpect to every other human character and accompliſhment, it is of no conſequence at all as to religion. This, I think, is contrary to daily experience. Where do we expect to find young perſons piouſly diſpoſed but in pious families? The exceptions, or rather appearances to the contrary, are eaſily accounted for in more ways than one. Many perſons appear to be religious, while they are not ſo in reality, but are chiefly governed by the applauſe of men. Hence their viſible conduct may be ſpecious, or their public performances applauded, and yet their families be neglected.

It muſt alſo be acknowledged, that ſome truly well-diſpoſed perſons are extremely defective or imprudent in this part of their duty, and therefore it

is no wonder that it ſhould not ſucceed. This was plainly the caſe with Eli, whoſe ſons, we are told, made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not. However, I muſt obſerve, if we allow ſuch to be truly good men, we muſt at the ſame time confeſs, that this was a great drawback upon their character; and that they differed very much from the father of the faithful, who had this honourable teſtimony given him by God, "I know him, that he will command his children, and his houſehold after him, that they ſerve me." To this we may add, that the child of a good man, who is ſeen to follow diſſolute courſes, draws the attention of mankind more upon him, and is much more talked of, than any other perſon of the ſame character. Upon the whole, it is certainly of moment, that one who deſires to educate his children in the fear of God, ſhould do it in a humble perſuaſion, that if he is not defective in his own duty, he will not be denied the bleſſing of ſucceſs. I could tell you ſome remarkable inſtances of parents who ſeemed to labour in vain for a long time, and yet were ſo happy as to ſee a change at laſt; and of ſome children in whom, even after the death of the parents, the ſeed which was early ſown, and ſeemed to have been entirely ſmothered, has at laſt produced fruit. And indeed no leſs ſeems to follow from the promiſe annexed to the command, "Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Having laid down theſe preliminaries, I ſhall ſay a few things upon the preſervation of the health of

children. Perhaps you will think this belongs only to the phyſician; but though a phyſician ought to be employed to apply remedies in dangerous caſes, any man, with a little reflection, may be allowed to form ſome judgment as to the ordinary means of their preſervation; nay, I cannot help being of opinion, that any other man is fitter than a phyſician for this purpoſe. His thoughts are ſo conſtantly taken up with the rules of his art, that it is an hundred to one he will preſcribe more methods and medicines than can be uſed with ſafety.

The fundamental rules for preſerving the health of children, are cleanlineſs, liberty, and free air. By cleanlineſs I do not mean keeping the outſide of their clothes in a proper condition to be ſeen before company, nor hindering them from fouling their hands and feet when they are capable of going abroad, but keeping them dry in the night time, when young, and frequently waſhing their bodies with cold water, and other things of the ſame nature and tendency. The ſecond rule is liberty: All perſons, young and old, love liberty; and, as far as it does them no harm, it will certainly do them good. Many a free-born ſubject is kept a ſlave for the firſt ten years of his life, and is ſo much handled, and carried about by women in his infancy, that the limbs and other parts of his body are frequently miſhapen, and the whole very much weakened; beſides, the ſpirits, when under confinement, are generally in a dull and languiſhing ſtate. The beſt exerciſe in the world for children, is to let them romp and jump about as ſoon as they are able, according to their own fancy. This, in the

country, is beſt done in the fields; in a city, a well aired room is better than being ſent into the ſtreets under the care of a ſervant; very few of whom are able ſo far to curb their own inclinations, as to let the children follow theirs, even where they may do it with ſafety. As to free air, there is nothing more eſſentially neceſſary to the ſtrength and growth of animals and plants. If a few plants of any kind are ſown in a cloſe confined place, they commonly grow up tall, ſmall, and very weak. I have ſeen a bed of beans in a garden, under the ſhade of a hedge or tree, very long and ſlender, which brought to my mind a young family of quality, trained up in a delicate manner, who, if they grow at all, grow to length, but never to thickneſs. So univerſal is this, that I believe the body of a ſturdy or well-built make, is reckoned among them a coarſe and vulgar thing.

There is one thing, with regard to ſervants, that I would particularly recommend to your attention. All children are liable to accidents; theſe may happen unavoidably, but do generally ariſe from the careleſſneſs of ſervants; and to this they are almoſt always attributed by parents. This diſpoſes all ſervants, good or bad, to conceal them from the parents, when they can poſſibly do it. By this means children often receive hurts in falls or otherwiſe, which, if known in time, might be eaſily remedied, but not being known, either prove fatal, or make them lame or deformed. A near relation of mine has a high ſhoulder and a diſtorted waiſt, from this very cauſe. To prevent ſuch accidents, it is neceſſary to take all pains poſſible to acquire the

confidence of ſervants, to convince them of the neceſſity of concealing nothing. There are two diſpoſitions in parents, which hinder the ſervants from making diſcoveries; the firſt is, when they are very paſſionate, and apt to ſtorm and rage againſt their ſervants, for every real or ſuppoſed neglect. Such perſons can never expect a confeſſion, which muſt be followed by ſuch terrible vengeance. The other is, when they are tender-hearted or timorous to exceſs, which makes them ſhew themſelves deeply affected, or greatly terrified, upon any little accident that befals their children. In this caſe, the very beſt ſervants are unwilling to tell them through fear of making them miſerable. In ſuch caſes, therefore, I would adviſe parents, whatever may be their real opinions, to diſcover them as little as poſſible to their ſervants. Let them ſtill inculcate this maxim, that there ſhould be no ſecrets concerning children kept from thoſe moſt nearly intereſted in them. And that there may be no temptation to ſuch conduct, let them always appear as cool and compoſed as poſſible when any diſcovery is made, and be ready to forgive a real fault, in return for a candid acknowledgment.

## LETTER II.

IF I miſtake not, my laſt letter was concluded by ſome remarks on the means of trying ſervants to be careful of the ſafety of children, and ready to diſcover, early and honeſtly, any accidents that might happen to befal them. I muſt make ſome

farther remarks upon ſervants. It is a ſubject of great importance, and inſeparably connected with what I have undertaken. You will find it extremely difficult to educate children properly, if the ſervants of the family do not conſpire in it; and impoſſible, if they are inclined to hinder it. In ſuch a caſe, the orders iſſued, or the method laid down, will be neglected, where that is poſſible and ſafe; where neglect is unſafe, they will be unſucceſsfully or improperly executed, and many times, in the hearing of the children, they will be either laughed at, or complained of and diſapproved. The certain conſequence of this is, that children will inſenſibly come to look upon the directions and cautions of their parents, as unneceſſary or unreaſonable reſtraints. It is a known and very common way for ſervants to inſinuate themſelves into the affections of children, by granting them ſuch indulgencies as would be refuſed them by their parents, as well as concealing the faults which ought to be puniſhed by parents, and they are often very ſucceſsful in training them up to a moſt dangerous fidelity in keeping the ſecret.

Such is the evil to be feared, which ought to have been more largely deſcribed; let us now come to the remedy. The foundation, to be ſure, is to be very nice and careful in the choice of ſervants. This is commonly thought to be an extremely difficult matter, and we read frequently in public papers, the heavieſt complaints of bad ſervants. I am, however, one of thoſe who think the fault is at leaſt as often in the maſters. Good ſervants may certainly be had, and do generally incline of them-

ſelves to be in good families, and when they find that they are ſo, do often continue very long in the ſame, without deſiring to remove. You ought, therefore, to be exceedingly ſcrupulous, and not without an evident neceſſity to hire any ſervant but who ſeems to be ſober and pious. Indeed I flatter myſelf, that a pious family is ſuch as none but one who is either a ſaint or a hypocrite will be ſuppoſed to continue in. If any ſymptoms of the laſt character appear, you need not be told what you ought to do.

The next thing after the choice of ſervants, is to make conſcience of doing your duty to them, by example, inſtruction, admonition and prayer. Your fidelity to them will naturally produce in them fidelity to you and yours, and that upon the very beſt principles. It will excite in them a deep ſenſe of gratitude, and at the ſame time fill them with ſentiments of the higheſt and moſt unfeigned eſteem. I could tell you of inſtances (you will however probably recollect ſome yourſelf) of ſervants who, from their living comfortably and receiving benefits in pious families, have preſerved ſuch a regard and attachment to their maſters, as have been little ſhort of idolatry. I ſhall juſt mention one—a worthy woman in this place, formerly ſervant to one of my predeceſſors, and married many years ſince to a thriving tradeſman, continues to have ſuch an undiminiſhed regard to her maſter's memory, that ſhe cannot ſpeak of him without delight; keeps by her to this hour the newſpaper which gives an account of his death and character, and, I believe, would

not exchange it for a bill or bond for a very conſiderable ſum.

But the third and finiſhing direction with regard to ſervants, is to convince them, in a cool and diſpaſſionate manner, of the reaſonableneſs of your method of proceeding, that as it is dictated by conſcience, it is conducted with prudence. Thence it is eaſy to repreſent to them that it is their duty, inſtead of hindering its ſucceſs by oppoſition or negligence, to co-operate with it to the utmoſt of their power. It is not below any man to reaſon in ſome caſes with his ſervants. There is a way of ſpeaking to them on ſuch ſubjects, by which you will loſe nothing of your dignity, but even corroborate your authority. While you manifeſt your firm reſolution never to depart from your right and title to command, you may, notwithſtanding, at proper ſeaſons, and by way of condeſcenſion, give ſuch general reaſons for your conduct, as to ſhew that you are not acting by mere caprice or humour. Nay, even while you ſometimes inſiſt that your command of itſelf ſhall be a law, and that you will not ſuffer it to be diſputed, nor be obliged to give a reaſon for it, you may eaſily ſhew them that this alſo is reaſonable. They may be told that you have the greateſt intereſt in the welfare of your children, the beſt opportunity of being appriſed as to the means of proſecuting it, and that there may be many reaſons for your orders, which it is unneceſſary or improper for them to know.

Do not think that all this is exceſſive refinement, chimerical or impoſſible. Servants are reaſonable creatures, and are beſt governed by a mixture of

authority and reaſon. They are generally delighted to find themſelves treated as reaſonable, and will ſometimes diſcover a pride in ſhewing that they underſtand, as well as find a pleaſure in entering into your views. When they find, as they will every day by experience, the ſucceſs and benefit of a proper method of education, it will give them a high opinion of, and confidence in your judgment; they will frequently conſult you in their own affairs, as well as implicitly follow your directions in the management of yours. After all, the very higheſt inſtance of true greatneſs of mind, and the beſt ſupport of your authority, when you ſee neceſſary to interpoſe it, is not to be opinionative or obſtinate, but willing to acknowledge or remit a real miſtake, if it is diſcreetly pointed out, even by thoſe in the loweſt ſtations. The application of theſe reflections will occur in ſeveral of the following branches of this ſubject.

The next thing I ſhall mention as neceſſary, in order to the education of children, is, to eſtabliſh as ſoon as poſſible an entire and abſolute authority over them. This is a part of the ſubject which requires to be treated with great judgment and delicacy. I wiſh I may be able to do ſo. Opinions, like modes and faſhions, change continually upon every point; neither is it eaſy to keep the juſt middle, without verging to one or other of the extremes. On this, in particular, we have gone in this nation in general, from one extreme, to the very utmoſt limits of the other. In the former age, both public and private, learned and religious education, was carried on by mere dint of authority.

This, to be sure, was a savage and barbarous method, and was in many instances terrible and disgusting to the youth. Now, on the other hand, not only severity, but authority, is often decried; persuasion, and every soft and gentle method is recommended, on such terms as plainly lead to a relaxation. I hope you will be convinced that the middle way is best, when you find it is recommended by the Spirit of God in his word, Prov. xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxii. 15. You will also find a caution against excess in this matter, Col. ii. 21.

I have said above, that you should "establish, as soon as possible, an entire and absolute authority." I would have it early, that it may be absolute, and absolute, that it may not be severe. If parents are too long in beginning to exert their authority, they will find the task very difficult. Children, habituated to indulgence for a few of their first years, are exceedingly impatient of restraint; and if they happen to be of stiff or obstinate tempers, can hardly be brought to an entire, at least to a quiet and placid submission; whereas, if they are taken in time, there is hardly any temper but what may be made to yield, and by early habit the subjection becomes quite easy to themselves.

The authority ought also to be absolute, that it may not be severe. The more complete and uniform a parent's authority is, the offences will be more rare, punishment will be less needed, and the more gentle kind of correction will be abundantly sufficient. We see every where about us examples of this. A parent that has once obtained, and

knows how to preſerve authority, will do more by a look of diſpleaſure, than another by the moſt paſſionate words, and even blows. It holds univerſally in families and ſchools, and even the greater bodies of men, the army and navy, that thoſe who keep the ſtricteſt diſcipline give the feweſt ſtrokes. I have frequently remarked that parents, even of the ſofteſt tempers, and who are famed for the greateſt indulgence to their children, do, notwithſtanding, correct them more frequently, and even more ſeverely, though to very little purpoſe, than thoſe who keep up their authority. The reaſon is plain. Children, by fooliſh indulgence, become often ſo froward and petulant in their tempers, that they provoke their eaſy parents paſt all endurance, ſo that they are obliged, if not to ſtrike, at leaſt to ſcold them, in a manner as little to their own credit as their childrens profit.

There is not a more diſguſting ſight, than the impotent rage of a parent who has no authority. Among the lower ranks of people, who are under no reſtraint from decency, you may ſometimes ſee a father or mother running out into the ſtreet after a child who is fled from them, with looks of fury and words of execration, and they are often ſtupid enough to imagine, that neighbours or paſſengers will approve them in this conduct, though in fact it fills every beholder with horror. There is a degree of the ſame fault to be ſeen in perſons of better rank, though expreſſing itſelf ſomewhat differently. Ill words and altercations will often fall out between parents and children before company; a ſure ſign that there is defect of government at home or in

private. The parent, ſtung with ſhame at the miſbehaviour or indiſcretion of the child, deſires to perſuade the obſervers that it is not his fault, and thereby effectually convinces every perſon of reflection that it *is*.

I would therefore recommend to every parent to begin the eſtabliſhment of authority much more early than is commonly ſuppoſed to be poſſible; that is to ſay, from about the age of eight or nine months. You will perhaps ſmile at this; but I do aſſure you from experience, that by ſetting about it with prudence, deliberation, and attention, it may be in a manner completed by the age of twelve or fourteen months. Do not imagine I mean to bid you uſe the rod at that age; on the contrary, I mean to prevent the uſe of it in a great meaſure, and to point out a way by which children of ſweet and eaſy tempers may be brought to ſuch a habit of compliance, as never to need correction at all; and whatever their temper may be, ſo much leſs of this is ſufficient than upon any other ſuppoſition. This is one of my favourite ſchemes; let me try to explain and recommend it.

Habits, in general, may be very early formed in children. An aſſociation of ideas is, as it were, the parent of habit. If, then, you can accuſtom your children to perceive, that your will muſt always prevail over theirs, when they are oppoſed, the thing is done, and they will ſubmit to it without difficulty or regret. To bring this about, as ſoon as they begin to ſhew their inclination by deſire or averſion, let ſingle inſtances be choſen now and then (not too frequently) to contradict them. For ex-

ample, if a child ſhews a deſire to have any thing in his hand that he ſees, or has any thing in his hand with which he is delighted, let the parent take it from him, and when he does ſo, let no conſideration whatever make him reſtore it at that time. Then at a conſiderable interval, perhaps a whole day is little enough, eſpecially at firſt, let the ſame thing be repeated. In the mean time, it muſt be carefully obſerved, that no attempt ſhould be made to contradict the child in the intervals. Not the leaſt appearance of oppoſition, if poſſible, ſhould be found between the will of the parent and that of the child, except in thoſe choſen caſes when the parent muſt always prevail.

I think it neceſſary that thoſe attempts ſhould always be made and repeated at proper intervals by the ſame perſon. It is alſo better it ſhould be by the father than the mother or any female attendant, becauſe they will be neceſſarily obliged, in many caſes, to do things diſpleaſing to the child, as in dreſſing, waſhing, &c. which ſpoil the operation; neither is it neceſſary that they ſhould interpoſe, for when once a full authority is eſtabliſhed in one perſon, it can eaſily be communicated to others, as far as is proper. Remember, however, that mother or nurſe ſhould never preſume to condole with the child, or ſhew any ſigns of diſpleaſure at his being croſſed; but, on the contrary, give every mark of approbation, and of their own ſubmiſſion to the ſame perſon.

This experiment, frequently repeated, will in a little time ſo perfectly habituate the child to yield to the parent whenever he interpoſes, that he will

make no oppoſition. I can aſſure you from experience, having literally practiſed this method myſelf, that I never had a child of twelve months old, but who would ſuffer me to take any thing from him or her, without the leaſt mark of anger or diſſatisfaction, while they would not ſuffer any other to do ſo without the bittereſt complaints. You will eaſily perceive how this is to be extended gradually and univerſally, from one thing to another, from contradicting to commanding them. But this, and ſeveral other remarks upon eſtabliſhing and preſerving authority, muſt be referred to another letter.

## LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

THE theory laid down in my laſt letter for eſtabliſhing an early and abſolute authority over children, is of much greater moment than perhaps you will immediately apprehend. There is a great diverſity in the temper and diſpoſition of children, and no leſs in the penetration, prudence, and reſolution of parents. From all theſe circumſtances difficulties ariſe, which increaſe very faſt as the work is delayed. Some children have naturally very ſtiff and obſtinate tempers, and ſome have a certain pride, or if you pleaſe, greatneſs of mind, which makes them think it a mean thing to yield. This diſpoſition is often greatly ſtrengthened in thoſe of high birth, by the ideas of their own dignity and

importance, inſtilled into them from their mother's milk. I have known a boy not ſix years of age, who made it a point of honour not to cry when he was beat, even by his parents. Other children have ſo ſtrong paſſions, or ſo great ſenſibility, that if they receive correction they will cry immoderately, and either be, or ſeem to be, affected to ſuch a degree, as to endanger their health or life. Neither is it uncommon for the parents in ſuch a caſe to give up the point, and if they do not aſk pardon, at leaſt they give very genuine marks of repentance and ſorrow for what they have done.

I have ſaid this is not uncommon; but I may rather aſk you, whether you know any parents at all, who have ſo much prudence and firmneſs as not to be diſcouraged in the one caſe, or to relent in the other? At the ſame time it muſt always be remembered, that the correction is wholly loſt which does not produce abſolute ſubmiſſion. Perhaps I may ſay it is more than loſt, becauſe it will irritate inſtead of reforming them, and will inſtruct or perfect them in the art of overcoming their parents, which they will not fail to manifeſt on a future opportunity. It is ſurpriſing to think how early children will diſcover the weak ſide of their parents, and what ingenuity they will ſhew in obtaining their favour or avoiding their diſpleaſure. I think I have obſerved a child in treaty or expoſtulation with a parent, diſcover more conſummate policy at ſeven years of age, than the parent himſelf, even when attempting to cajole him with artful evaſions and ſpecious promiſes. On all theſe accounts, it muſt be a vaſt advantage that a habit of ſubmiſſion ſhould be

brought on ſo early, that even memory itſelf ſhall not be able to reach back to its beginning. Unleſs this is done, there are many caſes in which, after the beſt management, the authority will be imperfect; and ſome in which any thing that deſerves that name will be impoſſible. There are ſome families, not contemptible either in ſtation or character, in which the parents are literally and properly obedient to their children, are forced to do things againſt their will, and chidden if they diſcover the leaſt backwardneſs to comply. If you know none ſuch, I am ſure I do.

Let us now proceed to the beſt means of preſerving authority, and the way in which it ought to be daily exerciſed. I will trace this to its very ſource. Whatever authority you exerciſe over either children or ſervants, or as a magiſtrate over other citizens, it ought to be dictated by conſcience, and directed by a ſenſe of duty. Paſſion or reſentment ought to have as little place as poſſible; or rather, to ſpeak properly, though few can boaſt of having arrived at full perfection, it ought to have no place at all. Reproof or correction given in a rage, is always conſidered by him to whom it is adminiſtered, as the effect of weakneſs in you; and therefore the demerit of the offence will be either wholly denied or ſoon forgotten. I have heard ſome parents often ſay, that they cannot correct their children unleſs they are angry; to whom I have uſually anſwered, Then you ought not to correct them at all. Every one would be ſenſible, that for a magiſtrate to diſcover an intemperate rage in pronouncing ſentence againſt a criminal, would be highly indecent.

Ought not parents to punish their children in the same dispassionate manner? Ought they not to be at least equally concerned to discharge their duty in the best manner, in the one case as in the other?

He who would preserve his authority over his children, should be particularly watchful of his own conduct. You may as well pretend to force people to love what is not amiable, as to reverence what is not respectable. A decency of conduct, therefore, and dignity of deportment, is highly serviceable for the purpose we have now in view. Lest this, however, should be mistaken, I must put in a caution, that I do not mean to recommend keeping children at too great a distance, by an uniform sternness and severity of carriage. This, I think, is not necessary, even when they are young; and it may, to children of some tempers, be very hurtful when they are old. By and bye you shall receive from me a quite contrary direction. But by dignity of carriage, I mean parents showing themselves always cool and reasonable in their own conduct; prudent and cautious in their conversation with regard to the rest of mankind; not fretful or impatient, or passionately fond of their own peculiarities; and though gentle and affectionate to their children, yet avoiding levity in their presence. This, probably, is the meaning of the precept of the ancients, *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*. I would have them cheerful, yet serene. In short, I would have their familiarity to be evidently an act of condescension. Believe it, my dear Sir, that which begets esteem, will not fail to produce subjection.

That this may not be carried too far, I would

recommend every expreſſion of affection and kindneſs to children when it is ſafe; that is to ſay, when their behaviour is ſuch as to deſerve it. There is no oppoſition at all between parental tenderneſs and parental authority. They are the beſt ſupports to each other. It is not only lawful, but will be of ſervice, that parents ſhould diſcover the greateſt fondneſs for children in infancy, and make them perceive diſtinctly with how much pleaſure they gratify all their innocent inclinations. This, however, muſt always be done when they are quiet, gentle, and ſubmiſſive in their carriage. Some have found fault with giving them, for doing well, little rewards of ſweet-meats and play-things, as tending to make them mercenary, and leading them to look upon the indulgence of appetite as the chief good. This, I apprehend, is rather refining too much; the great point is, that they be rewarded for doing good, and not for doing evil. When they are croſs and froward, I would never buy peace, but force it. Nothing can be more weak and fooliſh, or more deſtructive of authority, than when children are noiſy and in an ill-humour, to give them or promiſe them ſomething to appeaſe them. When the Roman emperors began to give penſions and ſubſidies to the northern nations to keep them quiet, a man might have foreſeen, without the ſpirit of prophecy, who would be maſter in a little time. The caſe is exactly the ſame with children. They will ſoon avail themſelves of this eaſineſs in their parents, command favours inſtead of begging them and be inſolent when they ſhould be grateful.

The ſame conduct ought to be uniformly preſer-

ved, as children advance in years and underſtanding. Let parents try to convince them how much they have their real intereſt at heart. Sometimes children will make a requeſt, and receive a haſty or froward denial; yet, upon reflection, the thing appears not to be unreaſonable, and finally it is granted; and, whether it be right or wrong, ſometimes by the force of importunity it is extorted. If parents expect either gratitude or ſubmiſſion for favours ſo ungraciouſly beſtowed, they will find themſelves egregiouſly miſtaken. It is their duty to proſecute, and it ought to be their comfort to ſee the happineſs of their children; and therefore they ought to lay it down as a rule, never to give a ſudden or haſty refuſal; but when any thing is propoſed to them, conſider deliberately and fully whether it is proper; and after that, either grant it cheerfully, or deny it firmly.

It is a noble ſupport of authority, when it is really and viſibly directed to the moſt important end. My meaning in this, I hope, is not obſcure. The end I conſider as moſt important is, the glory of God in the eternal happineſs and ſalvation of children. Whoever believes in a future ſtate, whoever has a juſt ſenſe of the importance of eternity to himſelf, cannot fail to have a like concern for his offſpring. This ſhould be his end, both in inſtruction and government; and when it viſibly appears that he is under the conſtraint of conſcience, and that either reproof or correction are the fruit of ſanctified love, it will give them irreſiſtible force. I will tell you here, with all the ſimplicity neceſſary in ſuch a ſituation, what I have often ſaid in my

courſe of paſtoral viſitation in families, where there is in many caſes, through want of judgment as well as want of principle, a great neglect of authority: "Uſe your authority for God, and he will ſupport it. Let it always be ſeen that you are more diſpleaſed at ſin than at folly. What a ſhame is it, that if a child ſhall, through the inattention and levity of youth, break a diſh, or a pane of the window, by which you may loſe the value of a few pence, you ſhould ſtorm and rage at him with the utmoſt fury, or perhaps beat him with unmerciful ſeverity; but if he tells a lie, or takes the name of God in vain, or quarrels with his neighbours, he ſhall eaſily obtain pardon; or perhaps, if he is reproved by others, you will juſtify him, and take his part."

You cannot eaſily believe the weight that it gives to family authority, when it appears viſibly to proceed from a ſenſe of duty, and to be itſelf an act of obedience to God. This will produce coolneſs and compoſure in the manner; it will direct and enable a parent to mix every expreſſion of heart felt tenderneſs, with the moſt ſevere and needful reproofs. It will make it quite conſiſtent to affirm, that the rod itſelf is an evidence of love, and that it is true of every pious parent on earth, what is ſaid of our Father in heaven, "Whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons; for what ſon is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? But if ye are without chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then ye are baſtards and not ſons." With this maxim in your

eye, I would recommend, that ſolemnity take the place of, and be ſubſtituted for ſeverity. When a child, for example, diſcovers a very depraved diſpoſition, inſtead of multiplying ſtripes in proportion to the reiterated provocations, every circumſtance ſhould be introduced, whether in reproof or puniſhment, that can either diſcover the ſerioufneſs of your mind, or make an impreſſion of awe and reverence upon his. The time may be fixed beforehand—at ſome diſtance—the Lord's day—his own birth-day —with many other circumſtances that may be ſo ſpecial that it is impoſſible to enumerate them. I ſhall juſt repeat what you have heard often from me in converſation, that ſeveral pious perſons made it an invariable cuſtom, as ſoon as their children could read, never to correct them but after they had read over all the paſſages of Scripture which command it, and generally accompanied it with prayer to God for his bleſſing. I know well with what ridicule this would be treated by many, if publicly mentioned; but that does not ſhake my judgment in the leaſt, being fully convinced it is a moſt excellent method, and that it is impoſſible to blot from the minds of children, while they live upon earth, the impreſſions that are made by theſe means, or to abate the veneration they will retain for the parents who acted ſuch a part.

Suffer me here to obſerve to you, that ſuch a plan as the above requires judgment, reflection, and great attention in your whole conduct. Take heed that there be nothing admitted in the intervals that counteract it. Nothing is more deſtructive of authority than frequent diſputes and chiding upon ſmall mat-

ters. This is often more irkſome to children than parents are aware of. It weakens their influence inſenſibly, and in time makes their opinion and judgment of little weight, if not wholly contemptible. As before I recommended dignity in your general conduct, ſo, in a particular manner, let the utmoſt care be taken not to render authority cheap, by too often interpoſing it. There is really too great a riſk to be run in every ſuch inſtance. If parents will be deciding directly, and cenſuring every moment, it is to be ſuppoſed they will be ſometimes wrong, and when this evidently appears, it will take away from the credit of their opinion, and weaken their influence, even where it ought to prevail.

Upon the whole, to encourage you to chuſe a wiſe plan, and to adhere to it with firmneſs, I can venture to aſſure you, that there is no doubt of your ſucceſs. To ſubdue a youth after he has been long accuſtomed to indulgence, I take to be in all caſes difficult, and in many impoſſible; but while the body is tender, to bring the mind to ſubmiſſion, to train up a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, I know is not impoſſible: and he who hath given the command, can ſcarcely fail to follow it with his bleſſing.

## LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING now finiſhed what I propoſed to ſay on the means of eſtabliſhing and preſerving authority, I ſhall proceed to another very important branch of the ſubject, and beg your very particular attention to it, viz. *example*. Do not however ſuppoſe, that I mean to enter on that moſt beaten of all topics, the influence of example in general, or to write a diſſertation on the common ſaying, that "example teaches better than precept." An able writer doubtleſs might ſet even this in ſome new lights, and make it a ſtrong argument with every good man to pay the ſtricteſt attention to his viſible conduct. What we ſee every day has a conſtant and powerful influence on our temper and carriage. Hence ariſe national characters, and national manners, and every characteriſtic diſtinction of age and place. But of this I have already ſaid enough.

Neither is it my purpoſe to put you in mind of the importance of example to enforce inſtruction, or of the ſhamefulneſs of a man's pretending to teach others what he deſpiſes himſelf. This ought in the ſtrongeſt manner to be laid before paſtors and other public perſons, who often defeat habitually by their lives, what they attempt to do occaſionally in the execution of their office. If there remains the leaſt ſuſpicion of your being of that character, theſe letters would have been quite in another ſtrain. I believe there are ſome perſons of very irregular lives, who

have so much natural light in their consciences, that they would be grieved, or perhaps offended, if their children should tread exactly in their own steps; but even these, and much less others who are more hardened, can never be expected to undertake or carry on the system of education we are now endeavouring to illustrate. Suffer me, however, before I proceed, to make one remark—when I have heard of parents who have been watched by their own children when drunk, and taken care of, lest they should meet with injury or hurtful accidents; or whose intemperate rage and horrid blasphemies have without scruple been exposed, both to children and servants; or who, as has sometimes been the case, were scarcely at the pains to conceal their criminal amours, even from their own offspring—I have often reflected on the degree of impiety of principle, or searedness of conscience, or both united, necessary to support them in such circumstances. Let us leave all such with a mixture of pity and disdain.

By mentioning example, therefore, as an important and necessary branch of the education of children, I have chiefly in view a great number of particulars, which, separately taken, are, or at least are supposed to be of little moment, yet by their union or frequent repetition produce important and lasting effects. I have also in view to include all that class of actions in which there is, or may be, a coincidence between the duties of piety and politeness, and by means of which the one is incorporated with the other. These are to be introduced under the head of example, because they will appear there to best

advantage, and becauſe many of them can hardly be taught or underſtood in any other way.

This, I apprehend, you will readily approve of, becauſe, though you juſtly conſider religion as the moſt eſſentially neceſſary qualification, you mean at the ſame time that your children ſhould be fitted for an appearance becoming their ſtation in the world. It is alſo the more neceſſary, as many are apt to disjoin wholly the ideas of piety and politeneſs, and to ſuppoſe them not only diſtinct but incompatible. This is a dangerous ſnare to many parents, who think there is no medium between the groſſeſt ruſticity, and giving way to all the vanity and extravagance of a diſſipated life. Perſons truly pious have often by their conduct given countenance to this miſtake. By a certain narrowneſs of ſentiment and behaviour, they have become themſelves, and rendered their children unfit for a general intercourſe with mankind, or the public duties of an active life.

You know, Sir, as much as any man, how contrary my opinion and conduct have been upon this ſubject. I cannot help thinking, that true religion is not only conſiſtent with, but neceſſary to the perfection of true politeneſs. There is a noble ſentiment to this purpoſe illuſtrated at conſiderable length in the Port-Royal Eſſays, viz. "That worldly politeneſs is no more than an imitation or imperfect copy of Chriſtian charity, being the pretence or outward appearance of that deference to the judgment, and attention to the intereſt of others, which a true Chriſtian has as the rule of his life, and the diſpoſi-

tion of his heart *." I have at present in my mind the idea of certain persons, whom you will easily guess at, of the first quality, one or two of the male, and twice that number at least of the female sex, in whom piety and high station are united. What a sweetness and complacency of countenance, what a condescension and gentleness of manners, arising from the humility of the gospel being joined to the refined elegance inseparable from their circumstances in life!

Be pleased to follow me to the other extreme of human society. Let us go to the remotest cottage of the wildest country, and visit the family that inhabits it. If they are pious, there is a certain humanity and good-will attending their simplicity, which makes it highly agreeable. There is also a decency in their sentiments, which, flowing from the dictates of conscience, is as pleasing, in all respects, as the restraint imposed by the rules of good breeding, with which the persons here in view have little opportunity of being acquainted. On the contrary, unbred country people, when without principle, have generally a savageness and brutality in their carriage, as contrary to good manners as to piety

* The authors of these Essays, commonly called by writers who make mention of them, the Gentlemen of Port-Royal, were a society of Jansenists in France, who used to meet at that place; all of whom were eminent for literature, and many of them of high rank, as will be evident by mentioning the names of Pascal, Arnaud, and the Prince of Conti. The last was the author of the Essay from which the above remark is taken.

itſelf. No one has a better opportunity of making obſervations of this kind than I have, from my office and ſituation, and I can aſſure you, that religion is the great poliſher of the common people. It even enlarges their underſtanding as to other things. Having been accuſtomed to exerciſe their judgment and reflection on religious ſubjects, they are capable of talking more ſenſibly on agriculture, politics, or any common topic of indifferent converſation.

Let me not forget to ſpeak of the middle ranks of life. Here, alſo, I ſcruple not to affirm, that whatever ſphere a man has been bred in, or attained to, religion is not an injury, but an addition to the politeneſs of his carriage. They ſeem indeed to confeſs their relation to one another, by their reciprocal influence. In promiſcuous converſation, as true religion contributes to make men decent or courteous, ſo true politeneſs guards them effectually from any outrage againſt piety or purity. If I were unhappily thrown into mixed or dangerous company, I ſhould not apprehend any thing improper for me to hear from the moſt wicked man, but from the greateſt clown. I have known gentlemen who were infidels in principle, and whoſe lives, I had reaſon to believe, were privately very bad, yet in converſation they were guarded, decent, and improving; whereas, if there come into company a rough, unpoliſhed country gentleman, no man can promiſe that he will not break out into ſome profane exclamation or obſcene alluſion, which it would be wrong to attribute to impiety, ſo much as to rudeneſs and want of reflection.

I have been already too long in the introduction, and in giving the reaſons for what I propoſe ſhall make a part of this branch of the ſubject, and yet I muſt make another preliminary remark: There is the greater neceſſity for uniting piety and politeneſs in the ſyſtem of family example, that as piety is by that means inculcated with the greateſt advantage, ſo politeneſs can ſcarcely be attained in any other way. It is very rare that perſons reach a higher degree of politeneſs than what they have been formed to in the families of their parents and other near relations. True politeneſs does not conſiſt in dreſs, or a few motions of the body, but in a habit of ſentiment and converſation; the firſt may be learned from a maſter, and in a little time—the laſt only by a long and conſtant intercourſe with thoſe who poſſeſs, and are therefore able to impart it. As the difficulty is certainly greateſt with the female ſex, becauſe they have fewer opportunities of being abroad in the world, I ſhall take an example from among them.

Suppoſe a man of low birth, living in the country, by induſtry and parſimony has become wealthy, and has a daughter to whom he deſires to give a genteel education; he ſends her to your city to a boarding ſchool, for the other which is nearer me you are pleaſed not to think ſufficient for that purpoſe. She will ſpeedily learn to buy expenſive and faſhionable clothes, and moſt probably be in the very height and extravagance of the faſhion; one of the ſureſt ſigns of a vulgar taſte. She may alſo, if her capacity is tolerable, get rid of her ruſtic air and carriage; and if it be better than ordinary, learn

to discourse upon whatever topic is then in vogue, and comes in immediately after the weather, which is the beginning of all conversation. But as her residence is only for a time, she returns home, where she can see or hear nothing but as before. Must she not relapse speedily into the same vulgarity of sentiment, and perhaps the same provincial dialect, to which she had been accustomed from her youth? Neither is it impossible that she may just retain as much of the city ceremonial, as by the incongruous mixture will render her ridiculous. There is but one single way of escape, which we have seen some young women of merit and capacity take, which is to contract an intimacy with persons of liberal sentiments and higher breeding, and be as little among their relations as possible. I have given this description to convince you, that it is in their father's house, and by the conversation and manners to which they are there accustomed, that children must be formed to politeness as well as to virtue. I carry this matter so far, that I think it a disadvantage to be bred too high, as well as too low. I do not desire, and have always declined any opportunities given me of having my children reside long in families of high rank. I was afraid they would contract an air and manner unsuitable to what was to be their condition for the remainder of their lives. I would wish to give my children as just, as noble, and as elegant sentiments as possible, to fit them for rational conversation, but a dress and carriage suited to their station, and not inconsistent with the meekness of the gospel.

Though the length of this digression, or explana-

tory introduction, has made it impoſſible to ſay much in this letter on forming childrens' character and manners by example, before I conclude I will give one direction which is pretty comprehenſive. Give the utmoſt attention to the manner of receiving and entertaining ſtrangers in your family, as well as to your ſentiments and expreſſions with regard to them when they are gone. I am fully perſuaded, that the plaineſt and ſhorteſt road to real politeneſs of carriage, and the moſt amiable ſort of hoſpitality, is to think of others juſt as a Chriſtian ought, and to expreſs theſe thoughts with modeſty and candour. This will keep you at an equal diſtance from a ſurly and moroſe carriage on the one hand, and a fawning cringing obſequiouſneſs, or unneceſſary compliment and ceremony, on the other. As theſe are circumſtances to which children in early life are very attentive, and which occur conſtantly in their preſence, it is of much moment what ſentiments they imbibe from the behaviour of their parents. I do not mean only their learning from them an eaſe and dignity of carriage, or the contrary; but alſo, ſome moral or immoral habits of the laſt conſequence. If they perceive you happy and lifted up with the viſit or countenance of perſons of high rank, ſolicitous to entertain them properly, ſubmiſſive and flattering in your manner of ſpeaking to them, vain and apt to boaſt of your connection with them; and if, on the contrary, they perceive you hardly civil to perſons of inferior ſtations or narrow circumſtances, impatient of their company, and immediately ſeizing the opportunity of their departure to deſpiſe or expoſe them, will

not this naturally lead the young mind to conſider riches and high ſtation as the great ſources of earthly happineſs? Will it not give a ſtrong bias to their whole deſires and ſtudies, as well as viſibly affect their behaviour to others in ſocial life? Do not think that this is too nice and refined: the firſt impreſſions upon young perſons, though inconſiderable in themſelves, have often a great as well as laſting effect.

I remember to have read many years ago, in the Archbiſhop of Cambray's Education of a Daughter, an advice to parents to let their children perceive that they eſteem others, not according to their ſtation or outward ſplendour, but their virtue and real worth. It muſt be acknowledged, that there are ſome marks of reſpect due to men according to their place in civil life, which a good man would not fail to give them, even for conſcience ſake. But it is an eaſy matter, in perfect conſiſtency with this, by more frequent voluntary intercourſe, as well as by our uſual manner of ſpeaking, to pay that homage which is due to piety, to expreſs our contempt or indignation at vice, or meanneſs of every kind. I think it no inconſiderable addition to this remark, that we ſhould be as cautious of eſtimating happineſs as virtue by outward ſtation, and keep at the ſame diſtance from envying as from flattering the great.

But what I muſt particularly recommend to you, is to avoid that common but deteſtable cuſtom of receiving perſons with courteſy, and all the marks of real friendſhip in your houſe, and the moment they are gone, falling upon their character and con-

duct with unmerciful ſeverity. I am ſenſible there are ſome caſes, though they are not numerous, in which it may be lawful to ſay of others behind their back, what it would be at leaſt imprudent or unſafe to ſay in their own preſence. Neither would I exclude parents from the advantage of pointing out to their children the miſtakes and vices of others, as a warning or leſſon of inſtruction to themſelves. Yet as detraction in general is to be avoided at all times, ſo, of all others, the moſt improper ſeaſon to ſpeak to any man's prejudice is, after you have juſt received and treated him in an hoſpitable manner as a friend. There is ſomething mean in it, and ſomething ſo nearly allied to hypocriſy and diſingenuity, that I would not chuſe to act ſuch a part, even to thoſe whom I would take another opportunity of pointing out to my children as perſons whoſe converſation they ſhould avoid, and whoſe conduct they ſhould abhor.

In every ſtation, and among all ranks, this rule is often tranſgreſſed; but there is one point in which it is more frequently and more univerſally tranſgreſſed than in any other, and that is by turning the abſent into ridicule, for any thing odd or awkward in their behaviour. I am ſorry to ſay that this is an indecorum that prevails in ſeveral families of high rank. A man of inferior ſtation, for ſome particular reaſon, is admitted to their company. He is perhaps not well acquainted with the rules of politeneſs, and the preſence of his ſuperiors, to which he is unaccuſtomed, increaſes his embaraſſment. Immediately on his departure, a petulant boy or giddy girl will ſet about mimicking his mo-

tions, and repeating his phrases, to the great entertainment of the company, who apparently derive much self-satisfaction from a circumstance in which there is no merit at all. If any person renders himself justly ridiculous, by affecting a character which he is unable to sustain, let him be treated with the contempt he deserves. But there is something very ungenerous in people treating their inferiors with disdain, merely because the same Providence that made their ancestors great, left the others in a low sphere.

It has often given me great indignation to see a gentleman or his wife, of real worth, good understanding, but simple manners, despised and ridiculed for a defect which they could not remedy, and that often by persons the most insignificant and frivolous, who never uttered a sentence in their lives that deserved to be remembered or repeated. But if this conduct is ungenerous in the great, how diverting is it to see the same dispositon carried down through all the inferior ranks, and shewing itself in a silly triumph of every class over those who are supposed to be below them? I have known many persons, whose station was not superior to mine, take great pleasure in expressing their contempt of *vulgar ideas* and *low life*; and even a tradesman's wife in a city, glorying over the unpolished manners of her country acquaintance.

Upon the whole, as there is no disposition to which young persons are more prone than derision, or, as the author I cited above, M. Fenelon, expresses it, *un esprit mocqueur et malin*, and few that parents are more apt to cherish, under the idea of

its being a ſign of ſprightlineſs and vivacity, there is none which a pious and prudent parent ſhould take greater care to reſtrain by admonition, and deſtroy by a contrary example.

## LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

LET us now proceed to conſider more fully what it is to form children to piety by example. This is a ſubject of great extent, and perhaps of difficulty. The difficulty, however, does not conſiſt either in the abſtruſeneſs of the arguments, or uncertainty of the facts upon which they are founded, but in the minuteneſs or trifling nature of the circumſtances, taken ſeparately, which makes them often either wholly unnoticed, or greatly undervalued. It is a ſubject which, if I miſtake not, is much more eaſily conceived than explained. If you have it conſtantly in your mind, that your whole viſible deportment will powerfully, though inſenſibly, influence the opinions and future conduct of your children, it will give a form or colour, if I may ſpeak ſo, to every thing you ſay or do. There are numberleſs and nameleſs inſtances in which this reflection will make you ſpeak, or refrain from ſpeaking; act, or abſtain from ſome circumſtances of action in what you are engaged in; nor will this be accompanied with any reluctance in the one caſe, or conſtraint in the other.

But I muſt not content myſelf with this. My

profeſſion gives me many opportunities of obſerving, that the impreſſion made by general truths, however juſtly ſtated or fully proved, is ſeldom ſtrong or laſting. Let me, therefore, deſcend to practice, and illuſtrate what I have ſaid by examples. Here again a difficulty occurs. If I give a particular inſtance, it will perhaps operate no farther than recommending a like conduct in circumſtances the ſame, or perhaps perfectly ſimilar. For example, I might ſay, in ſpeaking to the diſadvantage of abſent perſons, I beſeech you never fail to add the reaſon why you take ſuch liberty; and indeed never take that liberty at all, but when it can be juſtified upon the principles of prudence, candour, and charity. A thing may be right in itſelf, but children ſhould be made to ſee why it is right. This is one inſtance of exemplary caution; but if I were to add a dozen more to it, they would only be detached precepts, whereas I am anxious to take in the whole extent of edifying example. In order to this, let me range or divide what I have to ſay under diſtinct heads. A parent who wiſhes that his example ſhould be a ſpeaking leſſon to his children, ſhould order it ſo as to convince them, that he conſiders religion as neceſſary, reſpectable, amiable, profitable, and delightful. I am ſenſible that ſome of theſe characters may ſeem ſo nearly allied, as ſcarcely to admit of a diſtinction. Many parts of a virtuous conduct fall under more than one of theſe denominations. Some actions, perhaps, deſerve all the epithets here mentioned, without exception and without prejudice one of another. But the diſtinctions ſeem to me very uſeful; for there is certainly

a clafs of actions which may be faid to belong peculiarly, or at leaft eminently, to each of thefe different heads. By taking them feparately, therefore, it will ferve to point out more fully the extent of your duty, and to fuggeft it when it would not otherwife occur, as well as to fet the obligation to it in the ftronger light.

1. You fhould, in your general deportment, make your children perceive that you look upon religion as abfolutely neceffary. I place this firft, becaufe it appears to me firft both in point of order and force. I am far from being againft taking all pains to fhew that religion is rational and honourable in itfelf, and vice the contrary; but I defpife the fooliſh refinement of thofe who, through fear of making children mercenary, are for being very fparing of the mention of heaven or hell. Such conduct is apt to make them conceive, that a neglect of their duty is only falling fhort of a degree of honour and advantage, which, for the gratification of their paffions, they are very willing to relinquifh. Many parents are much more ready to tell their children fuch or fuch a thing is mean, and not like a gentleman, than to warn them that they will thereby incur the difpleafure of their Maker. But when the practices are really and deeply criminal, as in fwearing and lying, it is quite improper to reft the matter there. I admit that they are both mean, and that juftice ought to be done to them in this refpect, but I contend that it fhould only be a fecondary conſideration.

Let not human reafonings be put in the balance with divine wifdom. The care of our fouls is re-

presented in Scripture as the one thing needful. He makes a miserable bargain, who gains the whole world and loses his own soul. It is not the native beauty of virtue, or the outward credit of it, or the inward satisfaction arising from it, or even all these combined together, that will be sufficient to change our natures and govern our conduct, but a deep conviction, that unless we are reconciled to God, we shall without doubt perish everlastingly.

You will say this is very true, and very fit for a pulpit, but what is that class of actions that should impress it habitually on the minds of children? Perhaps you will even say, what one action will any good man be guilty of, much more habitual conduct, that can tend to weaken their belief of it? This is the very point which I mean to explain. It is certainly possible that a man may at stated times give out, that he looks upon religion to be absolutely necessary, and yet his conduct, in many particulars, may have no tendency to impress this on the minds of his children. If he suffers particular religious duties to be easily displaced, to be shortened, postponed, or omitted, upon the most trifling accounts, depend upon it, this will make religion in general seem less necessary to those who observe it. If an unpleasant day will keep a man from public worship, when perhaps a hurricane will not keep him from an election meeting; if he chuses to take physic, or give it to his children on the Lord's day, when it could be done with equal ease on the day before or after; if he will more readily allow his servants to pay a visit to their friends on that day than any other, though he has reason to believe

they will ſpend it in junketing and idleneſs—it will not be eaſy to avoid ſuſpecting, that worldly advantage is what determines his choice.

Take an example or two more on this head. Suppoſing a man uſually to worſhip God in his family, if he ſometimes omits it, if he allow every little buſineſs to interfere with it, if company will make him diſpenſe with it, or ſhift it from its proper ſeaſon, believe me, the idea of religion being every man's firſt and great concern, is in a good meaſure weakened, if not wholly loſt. It is a very nice thing in religion to know the real connexion between, and the proper mixture of ſpirit and form. The form without the ſpirit is good for nothing; but, on the other hand, the ſpirit without the form never yet exiſted. I am of opinion, that punctual, and even ſcrupulous regularity, in all thoſe duties that occur periodically, is the way to make them eaſy and pleaſant to thoſe who attend them. They alſo become, like all other habits, in ſome degree neceſſary; ſo that thoſe who have been long accuſtomed to them, feel an uneaſineſs in families where they are generally or frequently neglected. I cannot help alſo mentioning to you, the great danger of paying and receiving viſits on the Lord's day, unleſs when it is abſolutely neceſſary. It is a matter not merely difficult, but wholly impracticable in ſuch caſes, to guard effectually againſt improper ſubjects of converſation. Nor is this all; for let the converſation be what it will, I contend that the duties of the family and the cloſet are fully ſufficient to employ the whole time; which muſt therefore

be waſted or miſapplied by the intercourſe of ſtrangers.

I only further obſerve, that I know no circumſtance from which your opinion of the neceſſity of religion will appear with the greater clearneſs, or carry in it greater force, than your behaviour towards, and treatment of your children in time of dangerous ſickneſs. Certainly there is no time in their whole lives when the neceſſity appears more urgent, or the opportunity more favourable, for impreſſing their minds with a ſenſe of the things that belong to their peace. What ſhall we ſay then of thoſe parents who, through fear of alarming their minds, and augmenting their diſorder, will not ſuffer any mention te be made to them of the approach of death, or the importance of eternity? I will relate to you an example of this. A young gentleman of eſtate in my pariſh was taken ill of a dangerous fever in a friend's houſe at a diſtance. I went to ſee him in his illneſs, and his mother, a widow lady, intreated me not to ſay any thing alarming to him, and not to pray with him, but to go to prayer in another room, wherein ſhe wiſely obſerved, it would have the ſame effect. The young man himſelf ſoon found that I did not act as he had expected, and was ſo impatient that it became neceſſary to give him the true reaſon. On this he inſiſted in the moſt poſitive manner, that all reſtriction, ſhould be taken off, which was done. What was the conſequence? He was exceedingly pleaſed and compoſed; and if this circumſtance did not haſten, it certainly neither hindered nor retarded his recovery.

Be pleaſed to remark, that the young gentleman here ſpoken of, neither was at that time, nor is yet, ſo far as I am able to judge, truly religious; and therefore I have formed a fixed opinion, that in this, as in many other inſtances, the wiſdom of man diſappoints itſelf. Pious advice and conſolation, if but tolerably adminiſtered in ſickneſs, are not only uſeful to the ſoul, but ſerve particularly to calm an agitated mind, to bring the animal ſpirits to an eaſy flow, and the whole frame into ſuch a ſtate as will beſt favour the operation of medicine, or the efforts of the conſtitution, to throw off or conquer the diſeaſe.

Suffer me to wander a little from my ſubject, by obſerving to you, that as I do not think the great are to be much envied for any thing, ſo they are truly and heartily to be pitied for the deception that is uſually put upon them by flattery and falſe tenderneſs. Many of them are brought up with ſo much delicacy, that they are never ſuffered to ſee any miſerable or afflicting object, nor, ſo far as can be hindered, to hear any affecting ſtory of diſtreſs. If they themſelves are ſick, how many abſurd and palpable lies are told them by their friends? and as for phyſicians, I may ſafely ſay few of them are much conſcience-bound in this matter. Now, let the ſucceſs of theſe meaſures be what it will, the only fruit to be reaped from them is, to make a poor dying ſinner miſtake his or her condition, and vainly dream of earthly happineſs while haſtening to the pit of perdition. But, as I ſaid before, men are often taken in their own craftineſs. It oftentimes happens that ſuch perſons, by an ignorant

ſervant, or officious neighbour, or ſome unlucky accident, make a ſudden diſcovery of their true ſituation, and the ſhock frequently proves fatal. O how much more deſirable is it, how much more like the reaſon of men, as well as the faith of Chriſtians, to conſider and prepare for what muſt inevitably come to paſs! I cannot eaſily conceive any thing more truly noble, than for a perſon in health and vigour, in honour and opulence, by voluntary reflection to ſympathize with others in diſtreſs, and by a well-founded confidence in divine mercy, to obtain the victory over the fear of death.

2. You ought to live ſo as to make religion appear reſpectable. Religion is a venerable thing in itſelf, and it ſpreads an air of dignity over a perſon's whole deportment. I have ſeen a common tradeſman, merely becauſe he was a man of true piety and undeniable worth, treated by his children, apprentices, and ſervants, with a much greater degree of deference and ſubmiſſion than is commonly given to men of ſuperior ſtation without that character. Many of the ſame meanneſſes are avoided, by a gentleman from a principle of honour, and by a good man from a principle of conſcience. The firſt keeps out of the company of common people, becauſe they are below him; the laſt is cautious of mixing with them, becauſe of that levity and profaneneſs that is to be expected from them. If, then, religion is really venerable when ſincere, a reſpectable conduct ought to be maintained, as a proof of your own integrity, as well as to recommend it to your children. To this add, if you pleaſe, that as reverence is the peculiar duty of children to their

parents, any thing that tends to leſſen it is more deeply felt by them than by others who obſerve it. When I have ſeen a parent, in the preſence of his child, meanly wrangling with his ſervant, telling extravagant ſtories, or otherwiſe expoſing his vanity, credulity, or folly, I have felt juſt the ſame proportion of ſympathy and tenderneſs for the one, that I did of contempt or indignation at the other.

What has been ſaid will in part explain the errors which a parent ought to ſhun, and what circumſtances he ought to attend to, that religion may appear reſpectable. All meanneſſes, whether of ſentiment, converſation, dreſs, manners, or employment, are carefully to be avoided. You will apply this properly to yourſelf. I may, however, juſt mention, that there is a conſiderable difference in all theſe particulars, according to mens' different ſtations. The ſame actions are mean in one ſtation that are not ſo in another. The thing itſelf, however, ſtill remains: as there is an order and cleanlineſs at the table of tradeſmen, that is different from the elegance of a gentleman's, or the ſumptuouſneſs of a prince's or nobleman's. But to make the matter ſtill plainer by particular examples:—I look upon talkativeneſs and vanity to be among the greateſt enemies to dignity. It is needleſs to ſay how much vanity is contrary to true religion; and as to the other, which may ſeem rather an infirmity than a ſin, we are expreſsly cautioned againſt it, and commanded to be ſwift to hear and ſlow to ſpeak. Sudden anger, too, and loud clamorous ſcolding, are at once contrary to piety and dignity. Parents ſhould therefore acquire, as much as poſſi-

ble, a compoſure of ſpirit and meekneſs of language; nor are there many circumſtances that will more recommend religion to children, when they ſee that this ſelf-command is the effect of principle and a ſenſe of duty.

There is a weakneſs I have obſerved in many parents, to ſhew a partial fondneſs for ſome of their children, to the neglect, and in many caſes approaching to a jealouſy or hatred of others. Sometimes we ſee a mother diſcover an exceſſive partiality to a handſome daughter, in compariſon of thoſe that are more homely in their figure. This is a barbarity which would be truly incredible, did not experience prove that it really exiſts. One would think they ſhould rather be excited by natural affection, to give all poſſible encouragement to thoſe who labour under a diſadvantage, and beſtow every attainable accompliſhment to balance the defects of outward form. At other times we ſee a partiality which cannot be accounted for at all, where the moſt ugly, peeviſh, froward child of the whole family, is the favourite of both parents. Reaſon ought to counteract theſe errors, but piety ought to extirpate them entirely. I do not ſtay to mention the bad effects that flow from them, my purpoſe being only to ſhew the excellence of that character which is exempted from them.

The real dignity of religion will alſo appear in the conduct of a good man towards his ſervants. It will point out the true and proper diſtinction between condeſcenſion and meanneſs. Humility is the very ſpirit of the goſpel; therefore hear your ſervants with patience, examine their conduct with

candour, treat them with all the humanity and gentleneſs that is conſiſtent with unremitted authority; when they are ſick, viſit them in perſon, provide remedies for them, ſympathize with them, and ſhew them that you do ſo; take care of their intereſts; aſſiſt them with your counſel and influence to obtain what is their right. But, on the other hand, never make yourſelf their proper companion; do not ſeem to taſte their ſociety; do not hear their jokes, or aſk their news, or tell them yours. Believe me, this will never make you either beloved or eſteemed by your ſervants themſelves; and it will greatly derogate from the dignity of true religion in the eyes of your children. Suffer me alſo to caution you againſt that moſt unjuſt and illiberal practice, of exerciſing your wit in humorous ſtrokes upon your ſervants, before company, or while they wait at table. I do not know any thing ſo evidently mean, that is at the ſame time ſo common. It is, I think, juſt ſuch a cowardly thing as to beat a man who is bound; becauſe the ſervant, however happy a repartee might occur to him, is not at liberty to anſwer, but at the riſk of having his bones broken. In this, as in many other particulars, reaſon, refinement, and liberal manners, teach exactly the ſame thing with religion; and I am happy in being able to add, that religion is generally the moſt powerful, as well as the moſt uniform principle of decent conduct.

I ſhall have done with this particular when I have obſerved, that thoſe who are engaged in public, or what I may call political life, have an excellent opportunity of making religion appear truly reſpectable. What I mean is, by ſhewing them-

ſelves firm and incorruptible in ſupporting thoſe meaſures that appear beſt calculated for promoting the intereſt of religion and the good of mankind. In all theſe caſes I admire that man who has principles, whoſe principles are known, and whom every body deſpairs of being able to ſeduce, or bring over to the oppoſite intereſt. I do not commend furious and intemperate zeal. Steadineſs is a much better, and quite a different thing. I would contend with any man who ſhould ſpeak moſt calmly, but I would alſo contend with him who ſhould act moſt firmly. As for your placebo's, your prudent, courtly, compliant gentlemen, whoſe vote in Aſſembly will tell you where they dined the day before, I hold them very cheap indeed, as you very well know. I do not enter further into this argument, but conclude at this time by obſerving, that public meaſures are always embraced under pretence of principle, and therefore an uniform uncorrupted public character is one of the beſt evidences of real principle. The free-thinking gentry tell us upon this ſubject, that "every man has his price." It lies out of my way to attempt refuting them at preſent, but it is to be hoped there are many whoſe price is far above their reach. If ſome of my near relations, who took ſo much pains to attach me to the intereſt of evangelical truth, had been governed by court influence in their political conduct, it had not been in my power to have eſteemed their character, or perhaps to have adhered to their inſtructions. But as things now ſtand, I have done both from the beginning, and I hope God will enable me, by his grace, to continue to do ſo to the end of life.

# LETTERS

ON

# MARRIAGE.

# LETTERS

ON

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## LETTER I.

I OFFER, with ſome heſitation, a few reflections upon the married ſtate. I expreſs myſelf thus, becauſe the ſubject has been ſo often and ſo fully treated, and by writers of the firſt claſs, that it may be thought nothing now remains to be ſaid that can merit attention. My only apology is, that what I offer is the fruit of real obſervation and perſonal reflection. It is not a copy of any man's writings, but of my own thoughts; and therefore, if the ſentiments ſhould not be in themſelves wholly new, they may poſſibly appear in a light not altogether common. I ſhall give you them in the way of aphoriſms or obſervations; and ſubjoin to each, a few thoughts by way of proof or illuſtration.

1. Nothing can be more contrary to reaſon or public utility, than the converſation and writings of thoſe who turn matrimony into ridicule; yet it is, in many caſes, as weakly defended as it is unjuſtly attacked.

Thoſe who treat marriage with ridicule, act in direct and deliberate oppoſition to the order of Providence, and to the conſtitution of the ſociety of which they are members. The true reaſon why they are borne with ſo patiently is, that the Author of our nature has implanted in us inſtinctive propenſities, which are by much too ſtrong for their feeble attacks. But if we are to eſtimate the malignity of a man's conduct or ſentiments, not from their effect, but from their native tendency, and his inward diſpoſition, it is not eaſy to imagine any thing more criminal than an attempt to bring marriage into diſeſteem. It is plainly an effort, not only to deſtroy the happineſs, but to prevent the exiſtence of human nature. A man who continues through life in a ſingle ſtate, ought in juſtice to endeavour to ſatisfy the Public that his caſe is ſingular, and that he has ſome inſuperable obſtacle to plead in his excuſe. If, inſtead of this, he reaſons in defence of his own conduct, and takes upon him to condemn that of others, it is at once incredible and abſurd; that is to ſay, he can ſcarcely be believed to be ſincere; and whether he be ſincere or not, he deſerves to be deteſted.

In ſupport of the laſt part of my remark, let it be obſerved, that thoſe who write in defence of marriage, uſually give ſuch ſublime and exalted deſcriptions, as are not realized in one caſe of a

thouſand, and therefore cannot be a juſt motive to a conſiderate man. Inſtead of inſiſting on the abſolute neceſſity of marriage for the ſervice of the ſtate, and the ſolid advantages that ariſe from it in ordinary caſes, they give us a certain refined idea of felicity, which hardly exiſts any where but in the writer's imagination. Even the Spectator, than whom there is hardly in our language a more juſt and rational writer, after ſaying many excellent things in defence of marriage, ſcarcely ever fails to draw the character of a lady in ſuch terms, that I may ſafely ſay, not above one that anſwers the deſcription is to be found in a pariſh, or perhaps a country. Now, is it not much better to leave the matter to the force of nature, than to urge it by ſuch arguments as theſe? Is the manner of thinking induced by ſuch writings, likely to haſten or poſtpone a man's entering into the marriage ſtate?

There is alſo a fault I think to be found in almoſt every writer who ſpeaks in favour of the female ſex, that they overrate the charms of the outward form. This is the caſe in all romances, a claſs of writings to which the world is very little indebted. The ſame thing may be ſaid of plays, where the heroine for certain, and often all the ladies that are introduced, are repreſented as inimitably beautiful. Even Mr Addiſon himſelf, in his admirable deſcription of Martia which he puts in the mouth of Juba, though it begins with,

*'Tis not a ſet of features or complexion,* &c.

yet could not help inſerting,

*True ſhe is fair; O, how divinely fair!*

Now, I apprehend this is directly contrary to what ſhould be the deſign of every moral writer. Men are naturally too apt to be carried away with the admiration of a beautiful face. Muſt it not, therefore, confirm them in this error, when beauty is made an eſſential part of every amiable character? The preference ſuch writers pretend to give to the mental qualities, goes but a little way to remedy the evil. If they are never ſeparated in the deſcription, wherever men find the one they will preſume upon the other. But is this according to truth, or agreeable to experience? What vaſt numbers of the moſt valuable women are to be found, who are by no means "divinely fair!" Are theſe all to be neglected then? Or is it not certain, from experience, that there is not a ſingle quality on which matrimonial happineſs depends ſo little as outward form? Every other quality that is good will go a certain length to atone for what is bad; as, for example, if a woman is active and induſtrious in her family, it will make a huſband bear with more patience a little anxiety of countenance, or fretfulneſs of temper, though in themſelves diſagreeable. But (always ſuppoſing the honey-moon to be over) I do not think that beauty atones in the leaſt degree for any bad quality whatſoever; it is, on the contrary, an aggravation of them, being conſidered as a breach of faith, or deception, by holding out a falſe ſignal.

2. In the married ſtate in general, there is not ſo much happineſs as young lovers dream of; nor is there by far ſo much unhappineſs as looſe authors univerſally ſuppoſe.

The firſt part of this aphoriſm will probably be eaſily admitted. Before mentioning, however, the little I mean to ſay upon it, I beg leave to obſerve, that it would be quite wrong to blame the tenderneſs and fervency of affection by which the ſexes are drawn to one another, and that generous devotedneſs of heart which is often to be ſeen on one, and ſometimes on both ſides. This is nature itſelf, and when under the reſtraint of reaſon, and government of prudence, may be greatly ſubſervient to the future happineſs of life. But there is certainly an extravagance of ſentiment and language on this ſubject, that is at once ridiculous in itſelf, and the proper cauſe, in due time, of wretchedneſs and diſappointment.

Let any man, who has outlived theſe ſenſations himſelf, and has leiſure to be amuſed, dip a little into the love ſongs that have been compoſed and publiſhed, from Anacreon to the preſent day, and what a fund of entertainment will he find provided for him! The heathen gods and goddeſſes are the ſtanding and lawful means of celebrating the praiſes of a miſtreſs, before whom, no doubt, Venus for beauty, and Minerva for wiſdom, muſt go for nothing. Every image in nature has been called up to heighten our idea of female charms—the paleneſs of the lily, the freſhneſs of the roſe, the bluſh of the violet, and the vermilion of the peach. This is even ſtill nothing. One of the moſt approved topics of a love-ſick writer is, that all nature fades and mourns at the abſence of his fair, and puts on a new bloom at her approach. All this, we know well, has place only in his imagination; for nature

proceeds quietly in her courſe, without minding him and his charmer in the leaſt. But we are not yet done. The glory of the heavenly orbs, the luſtre of the ſun himſelf, and even the joys of heaven, are frequently and familiarly introduced, to expreſs a lover's happineſs or hopes. Flames, darts, arrows, and lightning from a female eye, have been expreſſions as old at leaſt as the art of writing, and are ſtill in full vogue. Some of theſe we can find no other fault with, than that they are a little *outre*, as the French expreſs it; but I confeſs I have ſometimes been ſurpriſed at the choice of lightning, becauſe it is capable of a double application, and may put us in mind that ſome wives have lightning in their eyes ſufficient to terrify a huſband, as well as the maids have to conſume a lover.

Does not all this plainly ſhew, that young perſons are apt to indulge themſelves with romantic expectations of a delight, both ecſtatic and permanent, ſuch as never did, and never can exiſt? And does it not at the ſame time expoſe matrimony to the ſcoffs of libertines, who, knowing that theſe raptures muſt ſoon come to an end, think it ſufficient to diſparage the ſtate itſelf, that ſome inconſiderate perſons have not met with in it what it was never intended to beſtow?

I proceed therefore to obſerve, that there is not by far ſo much unhappineſs in the married ſtate in general, as looſe authors univerſally ſuppoſe. I chuſe to ſtate the argument in this manner, becauſe it is much more ſatisfying than drawing pictures of the extremes on either hand. It ſignifies very little, on the one hand, to deſcribe the ſtate of a few per-

ſons diſtinguiſhed for underſtanding, ſucceſsful in life, reſpected by the Public, and dear to one another; or, on the other, thoſe hateful brawls which by and bye produce an advertiſement in the newspapers, "Whereas Sarah, the wife of the ſubſcriber, has eloped from his bed and board," &c. If we would treat of this matter with propriety, we muſt conſider how it ſtands among the bulk of mankind. The propoſition, then, I mean to eſtabliſh is, that there is much leſs unhappineſs in the matrimonial ſtate than is often apprehended, and indeed as much real comfort as there is any ground to expect.

To ſupport this truth I obſerve, that taking mankind throughout, we find much more ſatisfaction and cheerfulneſs in the married than in the ſingle. In proportion to their numbers, I think of thoſe that are grown up to maturer years, or paſt the meridian of life, there is a much greater degree of peeviſhneſs and diſcontent, whimſicalneſs and peculiarity, in the laſt than in the firſt. The proſpect of continuing ſingle to the end of life, narrows the mind, and cloſes the heart. I knew an inſtance of a gentleman of good eſtate, who lived ſingle till he was paſt forty, and he was eſteemed by all his neighbours, not only frugal but mean in ſome parts of his conduct. This ſame perſon afterwards marrying, and having children, every body obſerved that he became liberal and open-hearted on the change, when one would have thought he had a ſtronger motive than before to ſave and hoard up. On this a neighbour of his made a remark, as a philoſopher, that every ultimate paſſion is ſtronger

than an intermediate one; that a ſingle perſon loves wealth immediately, and on its own account; whereas a parent can ſcarcely help preferring his children before it, and valuing it only for their ſakes.

This leads me to obſerve, that marriage muſt be the ſource of happineſs, as being the immediate cauſe of many other relations the moſt intereſting and delightful. I cannot eaſily figure to myſelf any man who does not look upon it as the firſt of earthly bleſſings to have children, to be the objects of attachment and care when they are young, and to inherit his name and ſubſtance when he himſelf muſt, in the courſe of nature, go off the ſtage. Does not this very circumſtance give unſpeakable dignity to each parent in the other's eye, and ſerve to increaſe and confirm that union, which youthful paſſion and leſs durable motives firſt occaſioned to take place? I rather chuſe to mention this argument, becauſe neither exalted underſtandings, nor elegance of manners, are neceſſary to give it force. It is felt by the peaſant as well as by the prince; and, if we believe ſome obſervers on human life, its influence is not leſs, but greater, in the lower than in the higher ranks.

Before I proceed to any further remarks, I muſt ſay a few words to prevent or remove a deception which very probably leads many into error on this ſubject. It is no other than a man's ſuppoſing what would not give him happineſs cannot give it to another. Becauſe, perhaps, there are few married women, whoſe perſons, converſation, manners and conduct, are altogether to his taſte, he takes upon him to conclude that the huſbands, in theſe nume-

rous inſtances, muſt lead a miſerable life. Is it needful to ſay any thing to ſhew the fallacy of this? The taſtes and diſpoſitions of men are as various as their faces; and therefore what is diſpleaſing to one may be, not barely tolerable, but agreeable to another. I have known a huſband delighted with his wife's fluency and poignancy of ſpeech in ſcolding her ſervants, and another who was not able to bear the leaſt noiſe of the kind with patience.

Having obviated this miſtake, it will be proper to obſerve, that through all the lower and middle ranks of life, there is generally a good meaſure of matrimonial or domeſtic comfort, when their circumſtances are eaſy, or their eſtate growing. This is eaſily accounted for, not only from their being free from one of the moſt uſual cauſes of peeviſhneſs and diſcontent, but becauſe the affairs of a family are very ſeldom in a thriving ſtate, unleſs both contribute their ſhare of diligence; ſo that they have not only a common happineſs to ſhare, but a joint merit in procuring it. Men may talk in raptures of youth and beauty, wit and ſprightlineſs, and an hundred other ſhining qualities; but after ſeven years cohabitation, not one of them is to be compared to good family management, which is ſeen at every meal, and felt every hour in the huſband's purſe. To this, however, I muſt apply the caution given above. Such a wife may not appear quite killing to a ſtranger on a viſit. There are a few diſtinguiſhed examples of women of the firſt-rate underſtandings, who have all the elegance of court breeding in the parlour, and all the frugality and activity of a farmer's wife in the kitchen; but I have not

found this to be the case in general. I learned from a certain author many years ago, that "a great care of household affairs generally spoils the free, careless air of a fine lady," and I have seen no reason to disbelieve it since.

Once more, so far as I have been able to form a judgment, wherever there is a great and confessed superiority of understanding on one side, with some good nature on the other, there is domestic peace. It is of little consequence whether the superiority be on the side of the man or woman, provided the ground of it be manifest. The fiercest contentions are generally where the just title to command is not quite clear. I am sensible I may bring a little ridicule upon myself here. It will be alleged that I have clearly established the right of female authority over that species of husbands known by the name of hen-peckt. But I beg that the nature of my position may be attentively considered. I have said, "Wherever there is a great and confessed superiority of understanding." Should not a man comply with reason, when offered by his wife, as well as any body else? or ought he to be against reason, because his wife is for it? I therefore take the liberty of rescuing from the number of hen-peckt, those who ask the advice, and follow the direction of their wives in most cases, because they are really better than any they could give themselves—reserving those only under the old denomination, who through fear are subject, not to reason, but to passion and ill-humour. I shall conclude this observation with saying, for the honour of the female sex, that I have known a greater number of instances of

juſt and amiable conduct, in caſe of a great inequality of judgment, when the advantage was on the ſide of the woman, than when it was on the ſide of the man. I have known many women of judgment and prudence, who carried it with the higheſt reſpect and decency to weak and capricious huſbands; but not many men of diſtinguiſhed abilities, who did not betray, if not contempt, at leaſt great indifference towards weak or trifling wives.

Some other things I had intended to offer upon this ſubject, but as the letter has been drawn out to a greater length than I expected, and they will come in with at leaſt equal propriety under other maxims, I conclude at preſent.

## LETTER II.

3. IT is by far the ſafeſt and moſt promiſing way to marry with a perſon nearly equal in rank, and perhaps in age; but if there is to be a difference, the riſk is much greater when a man marries below his rank, than when a woman deſcends from hers.

The firſt part of this maxim has been in ſubſtance advanced by many writers, and therefore little will need to be ſaid upon it. I muſt, however, explain its meaning, which is not always clearly comprehended. By equality in rank muſt be underſtood equality, not in fortune, but in education, taſte, and habits of life. I do not call it inequality, when a gentleman of eſtate marries a lady who has been

from the beginning brought up in the ſame claſs of ſociety with himſelf, and is in every reſpect as elegant in her ſentiments and manners, but by ſome incidents that perhaps have lately happened, is unequal to him in point of fortune. I know that from the corrupt and ſelfiſh views which prevail ſo generally in the world, a marriage of this kind is often conſidered as unequal, and an act of great condeſcenſion on the part of the man; but the ſentiment is illiberal and unjuſt. In the ſame manner, when a lady marries a gentleman of character and capacity, and is in every reſpect ſuitable to her, but that his eſtate is not equal to what ſhe might expect, I do not call it unequal. It is true, parents too frequently prefer circumſtances to character, and the female friends of a lady at her own diſpoſal may ſay in ſuch a caſe, that ſhe has made a poor bargain. But, taking it ſtill for granted that the fortune only is unequal, I affirm there is nothing in this circumſtance that forebodes future diſſenſion, but rather the contrary. An act of generoſity never produced a fretful diſpoſition in the perſon who did it, nor is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe it will often have that effect on the one who receives it.

The importance, therefore, of equality, ariſes ſingly from this circumſtance—that there is a great probability that the turn, taſte, employments, amuſements, and general carriage of the perſons ſo intimately joined, and ſo frequently together, will be mutually agreeable.

The occaſion or motive of firſt entering into the marriage contract, is not of ſo much conſequence to the felicity of the parties, as what they ſin after

they are fairly engaged, and cannot return back. When I viſit a new country, my judgment of it may be influenced a little, but neither much nor long, by flattering hopes or hideous apprehenſions, entertained before actual trial. It has often been ſaid, that diſſenſions between married people generally take their riſe from very inconſiderable circumſtances; to which I will add, that this is moſt commonly the caſe among perſons of ſome ſtation, ſenſe, and breeding. This may ſeem odd, but the difficulty is eaſily ſolved. Perſons of this character have a delicacy on the ſubject of ſo cloſe an union, and expect a ſweetneſs and compliance in matters that would not be minded by the vulgar; ſo that the ſmallneſs of the circumſtance appears in their eye an aggravation of the offence. I have known a gentleman of rank and his lady part for life, by a difference ariſing from a thing ſaid at ſupper, that was not ſo much as obſerved to be an impropriety by three-fourths of the company.

This, then, is what I apprehend occaſions the importance of equality in rank. Without this equality, they do not underſtand one another ſufficiently for continual intercourſe. Many cauſes of difference will ariſe, not only ſudden and unexpected, but impoſſible to be foreſeen, and therefore not provided againſt. I muſt alſo obſerve, that an explication or expoſtulation, in the caſes here in view, is more tedious and difficult than any other, perhaps more dangerous and uncertain in the iſſue. How ſhall the one attempt to convince the other of an incongruity of behaviour, in what all their former ideas have taught them to believe as innocent

or decent, ſometimes even laudable? The attempt is often conſidered as an inſult on their former ſtation, and inſtead of producing concord, lays the foundation of continual ſolicitude, or increaſing averſion. A man may be guilty of ſpeaking very unadviſedly through intemperate rage, or may perhaps come home fluſtered with liquor, and his wife, if prudent, may find a ſeaſon for mentioning them, when the admonition will be received with calmneſs, and followed by reformation; but if ſhe diſcovers her diſpleaſure at ruſticity of carriage, or meanneſs of ſentiment, I think there is little hope that it will have any effect that is good. The habit cannot be mended; yet he may have ſagacity enough to ſee that the wife of his boſom has deſpiſed him in her heart.

I am going to put a caſe. Suppoſe that the late ———, who acquired ſo vaſt an eſtate, had married a lady of the firſt rank, education, and taſte, and that ſhe had learned a few anecdotes of his public ſpeeches—that he ſpoke of *this here* report of *that there* committee, or of a man's being *drowned* on the coaſt of the *iſland* of Pennſylvania. Now, I deſire to know how ſhe could help pouting, and being a little out of humour, eſpecially if he came home full of inward ſatisfaction, and was honeſtly of opinion that he ſpoke *equally* as *well* as any other in the Houſe? That things may be fairly balanced, I will put another caſe. Suppoſe a gentleman of rank, literature, and taſte, has married a tradeſman's daughter for the ſake of fortune, or from deſire, which he calls love, kindled by an accidental glance of a freſh-coloured young woman: ſuppoſe her ne-

ver to have had the opportunity of being in what the world calls good company, and, in conſequence, to be wholly ignorant of the modes that prevail there; ſuppoſe, at the ſame time, that her underſtanding has never been enlarged by reading or converſation—in ſuch a caſe, how ſoon muſt paſſion be ſated? and what innumerable cauſes of ſhame and mortification muſt every day produce? I am not certain whether the difficulty will be greater, if ſhe continues the manners of her former, or attempts to put on thoſe of her preſent ſtation. If any man thinks that he can eaſily preſerve the eſteem and attention due to a wife in ſuch circumſtances, he will probably be miſtaken, and no leſs ſo if he expects to communicate refinement by a few leſſons, or prevent miſbehaviour by fretfulneſs, or peeviſh and ſatirical remarks.

But let me come now to the latter part of the maxim, which I do not remember to have ever met with in any author—that there is a much greater riſk when a man marries below his rank, than when a woman marries below her's. As to the matter of fact, it depends entirely on the juſtneſs and accuracy of my obſervations, of which every reader muſt be left to judge for himſelf. I muſt, however, take notice, that when I ſpeak of a woman marrying below her ſtation, I have no view at all to include what there have been ſome examples of—a gentleman's daughter running away with her father's footman, or a lady of quality with a player, this is, in every inſtance, an act of pure laſciviouſneſs, and is, without any exception that ever

heard of, followed by immediate ſhame and future beggary. It has not, however, any more connection with marriage, than the tranſactions of a brothel, or the memoirs of a kept-miſtreſs. The truth is, elopements in general are things of an eccentric nature; and when I hear of one, I ſeldom make any further inquiry after the felicity of the parties. But when marriages are contracted with any degree of deliberation, if there be a difference in point of rank, I think it is much better the advantage ſhould be on the woman's ſide than on the man's; that is to ſay, marriages of the firſt kind are uſually more happy than the other.

Suppoſing, therefore, the fact to be as now ſtated, what remains for me is to inveſtigate a little the cauſes of it, and point out thoſe circumſtances in human tempers or characters, or in the ſtate of ſociety, which give us reaſon to expect that it will, in moſt caſes, turn out ſo. Whenever any effect is general, in the moral as well as natural world, there muſt be ſome permanent cauſe, or cauſes, ſufficient to account for it. Shall we aſſign, as one reaſon for it, that there is, taking them complexly, more of real virtue and commanding principle in the female ſex than in the male, which makes them, upon the whole, act a better part in the married relation? I will not undertake to prove this opinion to be true, and far leſs will I attempt to refute it, or ſhew it to be falſe. Many authors of great penetration have affirmed it; and, doubtleſs, taking virtue to be the ſame thing with ſound faith and good morals, much may be ſaid in its favour. But there does not appear to me ſo great a ſuperiority in this

reſpect, as fully to account for the effect in queſtion. Beſides, the advantages which men have in point of knowledge, from the uſual courſe of education, may perhaps balance the ſuperiority of women in point of virtue; for none ſurely can deny, that matrimonial diſcord may not ariſe from ignorance and folly, as well as vice. Allowing, therefore, as much influence to this cauſe, as every one from his experience and obſervation may think its due, I beg leave to ſuggeſt ſome other things, which certainly do co-operate with it, and augment its force.

1. It is much eaſier, in moſt caſes, for a man to improve or riſe after marriage to a more elegant taſte in life than a woman. I do not attribute this in the leaſt to ſuperior natural talents, but to the more frequent opportunities he has of ſeeing the world, and converſing with perſons of different ranks. There is no inſtance in which the ſphere of buſineſs and converſation is not more extenſive to the huſband than the wife; and, therefore, if a man is married to one of taſte ſuperior to his own, he may draw gradually nearer to her, though ſhe deſcend very little. I think I can recollect more inſtances than one of a man in buſineſs married at firſt to his equal, and, on a ſecond marriage, to one of higher breeding, when not only the houſe and family, but the man himſelf was ſpeedily in a very different ſtyle. I can alſo recollect inſtances, in which married perſons roſe together to an opulent eſtate from almoſt nothing, and the man improved conſiderably in politeneſs, or fitneſs for public life, but the woman not at all. The old goſſips, and the old converſation, continued to the very laſt. It is not even

without example, that a plain woman, raiſed by the ſucceſs of her huſband, becomes impatient of the ſociety forced upon her, takes refuge in the kitchen, and ſpends moſt of her agreeable hours with her ſervants, from whom, indeed, ſhe differs nothing but in name. A certain perſon in a trading city in Great Britain, from being merely a mechanic, turned dealer, and in a courſe of years acquired an immenſe fortune. He had a ſtrong deſire that his family ſhould make a figure, and ſpared no expence in purchaſing velvets, ſilks, laces, &c. but at laſt he found that it was loſt labour, and ſaid very truly, that all the money in Great Britain would not make his wife and his daughters *ladies*.

2. When a woman marries below her rank, I think it is, generally ſpeaking, upon better motives than when a man marries below his, and therefore no wonder that it ſhould be attended with greater comfort. I find it aſſerted in ſeveral papers of the Spectator, and I think it muſt be admitted by every impartial obſerver, that women are not half ſo much governed, in their love attachments, by beauty or outward form as men. A man of a very mean figure, if he has any talents, joined to a tolerable power of ſpeech, will often make himſelf acceptable to a very lovely woman. It is alſo generally thought, that a woman rates a man pretty much according to the eſteem he is held in by his own ſex. If this is the caſe, it is to be preſumed that when a man ſucceeds in his addreſſes to a lady of higher breeding than his own, he is not altogether void of merit, and therefore will not in the iſſue diſgrace her choice. This will be confirmed by reflecting, that

many such marriages must be with persons of the learned professions. It is past a doubt that literature refines as well as enlarges the mind, and generally renders a man capable of appearing with tolerable dignity, whatever have been the place or circumstances of his birth. It is easy to see that the reverse of all this must happen upon the other supposition. When a man marries below his rank, the very best motive to which it can be attributed, is an admiration of her beauty. Good sense, and other more valuable qualities, are not easily seen under the disguise of low breeding, and when they are seen, have seldom justice done them. Now, as beauty is much more fading than life, and fades sooner in a husband's eye than any other, in a little time nothing will remain but what tends to create uneasiness and disgust.

3. The possession of the graces, or taste and elegance of manners, is a much more important part of a female than a male character. Nature has given a much greater degree of beauty and sweetness to the outward form of women than of men, and has by that means pointed out wherein their several excellencies should consist. From this, in conjunction with the former observation, it is manifest, that the man who finds in his wife a remarkable defect in point of politeness, or the art of pleasing, will be much more disappointed than the woman who finds a like defect in her husband. Many do not form any expectation of refinement in their husbands, even before marriage; not a few, if I am not much mistaken, are rather pleased than otherwise, to think that any who enters the house perceives the dif-

ference between the elegance of the wife, and the plainneſs, not to ſay the aukwardneſs of the huſband. I have obſerved this, even down to the loweſt rank. A tradſman's, or country farmer's wife, will ſometimes abuſe and ſcold her huſband for want of order or cleanlineſs, and there is no mark of inward malice or ill-humour in that ſcolding, becauſe ſhe is ſenſible it is her proper province to be accurate in that matter. I think alſo, that the huſband in ſuch caſes is often gratified inſtead of being offended, becauſe it pleaſes him to think that he has a wife that does juſt as ſhe ought to do. But take the thing the other way, and there is no rank of life, from the prince to the peaſant, in which the huſband can take pleaſure in a wife more aukward or more ſlovenly than himſelf.

To ſum up the whole, if ſome conformity or ſimilarity of manners is of the utmoſt conſequence to matrimonial comfort; if taſte and elegance are of more conſequence to the wife than the huſband, according to their ſtation; and if it is more difficult for her to acquire it after marriage, if ſhe does not poſſeſs it before—I humbly conceive I have fully ſupported my propoſition, that there is a much greater riſk in a man's marrying below his ſtation, than a woman's deſcending from her's.

## LETTER III.

I HAVE not yet done with the maxims on matrimonial happineſs; therefore obſerve,

4. That it is not by far of ſo much conſequence,

what are the talents, temper, turn of mind, character, or circumſtances of both or either of the parties, as that there be a certain ſuitableneſs or correſpondence of thoſe of the one to thoſe of the other.

Thoſe eſſay writers who have taken human nature and life as their great general ſubject, have many remarks on the cauſes of infelicity in the marriage union, as well as many beautiful and ſtriking pictures of what would be juſt, generous, prudent, and dutiful conduct, or their contraries, in particular circumſtances. Great pains have been taken alſo, to point out what ought to be the motives of choice to both parties, if they expect happineſs. Without entering into a full detail of what has been ſaid upon this ſubject, I think the two chief competitors for preference have generally been, good nature and good ſenſe. The advocates for the firſt ſay, that as the happineſs of married people muſt ariſe from a continual interchange of kind offices, and from a number of ſmall circumſtances that occur every hour, a gentle and eaſy diſpoſition, a temper that is happy in itſelf, muſt be the cauſe of happineſs to another. The advocates for good ſenſe ſay, that the ſweetneſs of good nature is only for the honey-moon; that it will either change its nature, and become ſour by long ſtanding, or become wholly inſipid; ſo that, if it do not generate hatred, it will at leaſt incur indifference or contempt, whereas good ſenſe is a ſterling quality, which cannot fail to produce and preſerve eſteem, the true foundation of rational love.

If I may, as I believe moſt people do, take the

prevailing ſentiments within the compaſs of my own reading and converſation, for the general opinion, I think it is in favour of good ſenſe. And if we muſt determine between theſe two, and decide which of them is of the moſt importance when ſeparated from the other, I have very little to ſay againſt the public judgment. But in this, as in many other caſes, it is only imperfect and general, and often ill underſtood and falſely applied. There is hardly a more noted ſaying, than that a man of ſenſe will never uſe a woman ill, which is true or falſe according to the meaning that is put upon the phraſe, *uſing a woman ill*. If it be meant, that he will not ſo probably beat his wife as a fool; that he will not ſcold or curſe her, or treat her with ill manners before company; or, indeed, that he will not ſo probably keep a continual wrangling, either in public or private, I admit that it is true. Good ſenſe is the beſt ſecurity againſt indecorums of every kind. But if it be meant, that a man will not make his wife in any caſe truly miſerable, I utterly deny it. On the contrary, there are many inſtances in which men make uſe of their ſenſe itſelf, their judgment, penetration, and knowledge of human life, to make their wives more exquiſitely unhappy. What ſhall we ſay of thoſe, who can ſting them with reflections ſo artfully guarded, that it is impoſſible not to feel them, and yet almoſt as impoſſible with propriety to complain of them?

I muſt alſo obſerve, that a high degree of delicacy in ſentiment, although this is the prevailing ingredient when men attempt to paint refined felicity in the married ſtate, is one of the moſt danger-

ous qualities that can be mentioned. It is like certain medicines that are powerful in their operation, but at the ſame time require the utmoſt caution and prudence as to the time and manner of their being applied. A man or woman of extreme delicacy, is a delightful companion for a viſit or a day. But there are many characters which I would greatly prefer in a partner, or a child, or other near relation, in whoſe permanent happineſs I felt myſelf deeply concerned. I hope nobody will think me ſo clownniſh as to exclude ſentiment altogether. I have declared my opinion upon this ſubject, and alſo my deſire that the woman ſhould be the more refined of the two. But I adhere to it, that carrying this matter to an extreme, is of the moſt dangerous conſequence. Your high ſentimentaliſts form expectations which it is impoſſible to gratify. The gallantry of courtſhip, and the *bienſeance* of general converſation in the *beau monde*, ſeem to promiſe what the downright reality of matrimony cannot afford.

I will here relate a caſe that fell within my obſervation. A perſon of noble birth had been ſome years married to a merchant's daughter of immenſe fortune, by which his eſtate had been ſaved from ruin. Her education had been as good as money could make it, from her infancy; ſo that ſhe knew every mode of high life as well as he. They were upon a viſit to a family of equal rank, intimately connected with the author of this letter. The manner of the man was diſtinguiſhed and exemplary. His behaviour to his lady was with the moſt perfect delicacy. He ſpoke to her as often as to any

other, and treated her not only with the same complacency, but with the same decency and reserve that he did other ladies. To this he added the most tender solicitude about her not taking cold, about her place in the chamber, and her covering when going abroad, &c. &c. After their departure, the whole family they had left, excepting one, were two or three days expatiating on the beauty of his behaviour. One lady, in particular, said at last, "O, how happy a married woman have I seen!" The single dissenter, who was an elderly woman, then said, "Well, you may be right, but I am of a different opinion; I do not like so perfect and finished a ceremonial between persons who have been married five or six years at least. I observed that he did every thing that he ought to have done, and likewise that she received his civilities with much dignity and good manners, but with great gravity. I would rather have seen him less punctual, and her more cheerful. If, therefore, that lady is as happy in her heart as you suppose, I am mistaken; that is all. But if I were to make a bet upon it, I would bet as much upon the tradesman and his wife, according to the common description, walking to church, the one three or four yards before the other, and never looking back." What did time discover? That nobleman and his lady parted within two years, and never re-united.

Let me now establish my maxim, that it is not the fine qualities of both or either party that will ensure happiness, but that the one be suitable to the other. By their being suitable, is not to be understood their being both of the same turn; but that

the defects of the one be supplied or submitted to by some correspondent quality of the other. I think I have seen many instances, in which gravity, severity, and even moroseness in a husband, where there has been virtue at bottom, has been so tempered with meekness, gentleness, and compliance in the wife, as has produced real and lasting comfort to both. I have also seen some instances, in which sourness, and want of female softness in a woman, has been so happily compensated by easiness and good humour in a husband, that no appearance of wrangling or hatred was to be seen in a whole life. I have seen multitudes of instances, in which vulgarity, and even liberal freedom, not far from brutality in a husband, has been borne with perfect patience and serenity by a wife, who by long custom had become, as it were, insensible of the impropriety, and yet never inattentive to her own behaviour.

As a further illustration, I will relate two or three cases from real life, which have appeared to me the most singular in my experience. I spent some time, many years ago, in the neighbourhood of, and frequent intercourse with a husband and his wife, in the following state. She was not handsome, and at the same time was valetudinary, fretful and peevish—constantly talking of her ailments, dissatisfied with every thing about her; and, what appeared most surprising, she vented these complaints most when her husband was present. He, on the other hand, was most affectionate and sympathizing, constantly upon the watch for any thing that could gratify her desires, or alleviate her dis-

treſſes. The appearance for a while ſurpriſed me, and I thought he led the life of a ſlave. But at laſt I diſcovered that there are two ways of complaining, not ſuddenly diſtinguiſhable to common obſervers; the one is an expreſſion of confidence, and the other of diſcontent. When a woman opens all her complaints to her huſband, in full confidence that he will ſympathize with her, and ſeeking the relief which ſuch ſympathy affords, taking care to keep to the proportion which experience hath taught her will not be diſagreeable to him, it frequently increaſes inſtead of extinguiſhing affection.

Take another caſe as follows. Syriſca was a young woman the reverſe of beauty. She got her living in a trading city, by keeping a ſmall ſhop, not of the millinery kind, which is nearly allied to elegance and high life, but of common grocery goods, ſo that the poor were her chief cuſtomers. By the death of a brother in the Eaſt Indies, ſhe came ſuddenly and unexpectedly to a fortune of many thouſand pounds. The moment this was known, a knight's lady in the neighbourhood deſtined Syriſca as a prize for Horatio, her own brother, of the military profeſſion, on half-pay, and rather paſt the middle of life. For this purpoſe ſhe made her a viſit, carried her to her houſe, aſſiſted, no doubt, in bringing home and properly ſecuring her fortune; and, in as ſhort a time as could well be expected, completed her purpoſe. They lived together on an eſtate in the country, often viſited by the great relations of the huſband. Syriſca was good natured and talkative, and therefore often betrayed the meanneſs of her birth and education, but

was not ſenſible of it. Good will ſupplied the place of good breeding with her, and ſhe did not know the difference. Horatio had generoſity and good ſenſe, treated her with the greateſt tenderneſs, and having a great fund of facetiouſneſs and good humour, acquired a happy talent of giving a lively or ſprightly turn to every thing ſaid by his wife, or diverting the attention of the company to other ſubjects. The reader will probably ſay, he took the way that was pointed out by reaſon, and was moſt conducive to his own comfort. I ſay ſo too; but at the ſame time affirm, that there are multitudes who could not, or would not have followed his example.

I give one piece of hiſtory more, but with ſome fear, that nice readers will be offended, and call it a caricature. However, let it go. Agreſtis was a gentleman of an ancient family, but the eſtate was almoſt gone; little more of it remained but what he farmed himſelf, and indeed his habitation did not differ from that of a farmer, but by having an old tower and battlements. He had either received no education, or had been incapable of profiting by it, for he was the moſt illiterate perſon I ever knew who kept any company. His converſation did not riſe even to politics, for he found ſuch inſuperable difficulty in pronouncing the names of generals, admirals, countries and cities, conſtantly occurring in the newſpapers, that he was obliged to give them up altogether. Of ploughs, waggons, cows, and horſes, he knew as much as moſt men: what related to theſe, with the prices of grain, and the news

of births and marriages in the parish and neighbourhood, completed the circle of his conversation.

About the age of forty he married Lenia, a young woman of a family equal to him in rank, but somewhat superior in wealth. She knew a little more of the strain of fashionable conversation, but not a whit more of any thing else. She was a slattern in her person, and of consequence there was neither cleanliness nor order in the family. They had many children; she bore him twins twice—a circumstance of which he was very proud, and frequently boasted of it in a manner not over delicate to those who had not been so fortunate in that particular. They were both good natured and hospitable: if a stranger came, he was made heartily welcome, though sometimes a little incommoded by an uproar among the children and the dogs, when striving about the fire in a cold day; the noise was, however, little less dissonant than the clamours of Agrestis himself, when rebuking the one, or chastening the other, out of complaisance to his guests. The couple lived many years in the most perfect amity, by their being perfectly suitable the one to the other; and I am confident not a woman envied the wife, nor a man the husband, while the union lasted.

It is very easy to see, from these examples, the vast importance of the temper and manner of the one being truly suitable to those of the other. If I had not given histories enough already, I could mention some in which each party, I think, could have made some other man or woman perfectly happy, and yet they never could arrive at happi-

neſs, or indeed be at peace with one another. Certainly, therefore, this ſhould be an object particularly attended to in courtſhips, or while marriage is on the *tapis*, as politicians ſay.

If I look out for a wife, I ought to conſider, not whether a lady has fine qualities, for which ſhe ought to be eſteemed or admired, or whether ſhe has ſuch a deportment as I will take particular delight in, and ſuch a taſte as gives reaſon to think ſhe will take delight in me. I may pitch too high, as well as too low, and the iſſue may be equally unfortunate. Perhaps I ſhall be told, there lies the great difficulty. How ſhall we make this diſcovery? In time of youth and courtſhip, there is ſo much ſtudied attention to pleaſe, from intereſted views, and ſo much reſtraint from faſhion and the obſervation of others, that it is hard to judge how they will turn out afterwards.

This I confeſs to be a conſiderable difficulty, and, at the ſame time, greateſt upon the man's ſide. The man being generally the eldeſt, his character, temper and habits, may be more certainly known; whereas there are ſometimes great diſappointments on the other ſide, and that happily both ways. I am able juſt now to recollect one or two inſtances of giddy and fooliſh, nay, of idle, lazy, drowſy girls, who, after marriage, felt themſelves intereſted, and became as ſpirited and active heads of families as any whatever, and alſo ſome of the moſt elegant and exemplary, who, after marriage, fell into a languid ſtupidity, and contracted habits of the moſt odious and diſguſtful kind. Theſe inſtances, however, are rare, and thoſe who will take the pains to

examine, may in general obtain ſatisfaction. It is alſo proper to obſerve, that if a man finds it difficult to judge of the temper and character of a woman, he has a great advantage on his ſide, that the right of ſelection belongs to him. He may aſk any woman he pleaſes, after the moſt mature deliberation, and need aſk no other; whereas a woman muſt make the beſt choice ſhe can, of thoſe only who do or probably will aſk her. But with theſe reflexions in our view, what ſhall we ſay of the inconceivable folly of thoſe who, in time of courtſhip, are every now and then taking things in high dudgeon, and ſometimes very great ſubmiſſions are neceſſary to make up the breaches? If ſuch perſons marry, and do not agree, ſhall we pity them? I think not. After the moſt ſerene courtſhip, there may poſſibly be a rough enough paſſage through life; but after a courtſhip of ſtorms, to expect a marriage of calm weather, is certainly more than common preſumption; therefore they ought to take the conſequences.

On the whole, I think that the calamities of the married ſtate are generally to be imputed to the perſons themſelves, in the following proportion: Three-fourths to the man, for want of care and judgment in the choice, and one-fourth to the woman on the ſame ſcore. Suppoſe a man had bought a farm, and, after a year or two, ſhould, in converſation with his neighbour, make heavy complaints how much he had been diſappointed, I imagine his friend might ſay to him, Did you not ſee this land before you bought it? O yes, I ſaw it often. Do you not underſtand ſoils? I think I do tolerably.

Did you not examine it with care? Not so much as I should have done: standing at a certain place, it looked admirably well; the fences too were new, and looked exceedingly neat; the house had been just painted a stone colour, with pannelling; the windows were large and elegant; but I neglected entirely to examine the sufficiency of the materials, or the disposition of the apartments. There were in the month of April two beautiful springs, but since I have lived here, they have been dry every year before the middle of June. Did you not inquire of those who had lived on the place, of the permanency of the springs? No, indeed, I omitted it. Had you the full measure you were promised? Yes, every acre. Was the right complete and valid? Yes, yes, perfectly good; no man in America can take it from me. Were you obliged to take it up in part of a bad debt? No, nothing like it. I took such a fancy for it all at once, that I pestered the man from week to week to let me have it. Why, really, then, says his friend, I think you had better keep your complaints to yourself. Cursing and fretfulness will never turn stones into earth, or sand into loam; but I can assure you, that frugality, industry, and good culture, will make a bad farm very tolerable, and an indifferent one truly good.

# SPEECH

IN THE

# SYNOD OF GLASGOW,

WHEN I WAS ACCUSED OF BEING THE AUTHOR OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

MODERATOR,

IT cannot but give me ſome pain to think upon my being obliged to ſtand at your bar, in ſome ſort as a pannel or accuſed perſon. At the ſame time, this is greatly alleviated by the conſideration, that I am now called to a regular defence of my character, which has been long abuſed in the moſt virulent manner, when I had no opportunity of ſpeaking for myſelf. But, Sir, before coming to the particular objection which has been pleaded before you, it is neceſſary that I ſhould endeavour to remove the great odium that has been by ſome in

the world induſtriouſly thrown upon me. Thoſe gentlemen at the bar, by whom I am now conſtrained to this apology, perhaps know who it was that taught certain perſons who knew nothing of me, to repreſent me as a firebrand, as violent and contentious, unfit to be a member of any quiet ſociety. This is a character, Sir, which I am moſt unwilling to bear, and which, if I am not greatly miſtaken, is moſt unjuſtly imputed to me, from any paſt part of my conduct. I call upon all thoſe with whom I have lived many years in preſbytery, to ſay if they will lay this to my charge. The apoſtle James tells us, that "if any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man." Perfection I do not plead; but any comparative guilt in this reſpect I do abſolutely refuſe. I call particularly upon my neareſt neighbour, a miniſter and co-preſbyter, who ought ſurely to be an unſuſpected witneſs, becauſe we have hardly ever agreed in any principle of church government; yet there hath not been the leaſt jealouſy or dryneſs between us as men, nor even as Chriſtians or miniſters; and yet difference in opinion has often cauſed ſuch things between very good men. I have alſo, Sir, been many times a member of this ſynod, ſometimes when debates were pretty high, and may ſafely affirm, that I have been as far from indiſcretion and violence as any of thoſe who accuſe me. I was none of thoſe, in April 1753, who, in the committee of overtures, ſpun out the time purpoſely with long ſpeeches till the ſynod's hour was come, and then would not ſuffer the committee to come to any deciſion, but, unleſs the ſynod were immediately conſtituted, threatened, with

apparent paſſion and fury, to withdraw, and conſtitute a ſeparate ſynod altogether. Probably Mr P———, and Mr M———, may be able to inform you who the perſons were; and I aſſure you from my own knowledge, that ſuch conduct in clergymen was very aſtoniſhing and offenſive to ſome of the laity. I have been told, that at the admiſſion of the Rev. Mr Baine, in Paiſley, the perſon who admitted him, among other advices, told him to beware of a party-ſpirit; and in this, another member ſaid, he ſpoke the ſenſe of the whole preſbytery. I am convinced there are ſome perſons who, by a party ſpirit, mean a perſon having different principles from themſelves; and that no meekneſs of temper, no purity of character, no humanity in his carriage, will, in that caſe, ſave an opponent from ſuch an imputation. And if by a party ſpirit be underſtood a regard to the perſon, as much as the cauſe, and proſecuting their own purpoſes in a violent and illegal manner, without candour or charity to thoſe who differ from them, I know none who have a juſter title to the character, than ſome members of that reverend body. Several inſtances might be given in their paſt conduct to juſtify this obſervation, ſome of which perhaps I ſhall afterwards mention; the reſt are well enough known, and indeed it ſeems to be generally agreed by the world about them, that they are not over patient of mixture.

This, Sir, very plainly appears from the caſe now before you. This preſbytery have refuſed leave to grant even a call to me, upon a preſentation and unanimous application from all concerned; and af-

ſign this reaſon for it, that there is a report of my being author of a book, which, they ſay in their minutes, is of a very bad tendency to the intereſts of religion, and injurious to the characters of many miniſters of this church, and therefore they appointed a committee, &c. The injury done to the town of Paiſley, it is the buſineſs of the congregation to complain of, and they have done it, and wait for redreſs from you. The injury done to me, I beg leave, in a few words, to repreſent to this venerable ſynod. And here, Sir, I do not complain of their taking into conſideration any book that they ſhall be pleaſed to think contrary to the intereſts of religion, and ſhould have been well ſatisfied to hear of a motion for cenſuring irreligious books come from that quarter. I wiſh, if ever it come from any quarter, they may faithfully inſpect it. But, Sir, I complain that they have joined my name to a certain book with which they are not pleaſed, and then have paſſed a ſentence condemning it, when I was not, and could not regularly be before them. This is a caſe that may have important conſequences. All I deſire is equity and juſtice, and that ſurely I have a right to claim. The preſbytery of Paiſley, Sir, had a right to accuſe me, if they pleaſed, before the preſbytery of which I am a member. But they had no right at all to condemn, or even to judge me themſelves, and much leſs when I was not heard. Perhaps it will be ſaid they have not found me guilty, but propoſed a peaceable manner of trying whether I was ſo or not; but, Sir, have they not found by their ſentence the relevancy

of the crime, againſt which, as well as the proof, any accuſed perſon has a right to be heard?

The injury they have done me, and the unjuſt and tyrannical method of their proceedings, appear in the moſt evident manner from the ſituation in which I now ſtand, and the manner of the cauſe being pleaded before you. You ſee with what difficulty they were hindered, or rather that they could not be hindered from entering into the merits of the cauſe, and endeavouring to perſuade the ſynod to condemn this book to which they have joined my name, before they have ſo much as let me know the nature and form of the proceſs againſt me, and when I have had no opportunity to ſee and anſwer their charge. This is againſt all rule, for by the form of proceſs it ought to have begun at the preſbytery of Irvine; and whether it be taken up upon the footing of a *fama clamoſa*, or a libel from a particular accuſer, there muſt ſtill be virtually a libel in the view of the court; but by bringing it in here, in the manner they have done, and pleading upon it, they are endeavouring to get a law made, as it were *ex poſt facto*, upon which I may be condemned hereafter; and they have reduced me to the neceſſity of pleading in defence of a book with which I do not, nor ever did pretend any connection, unleſs I would give a ſanction to a method of proceeding pregnant with tyranny and injuſtice. So that, though I come to the ſynod for juſtice, it is really hardly poſſible for you fully to grant it, becauſe you cannot wholly underſtand the bad effects of the preſbytery's wrong procedure. I am ſenſible, Sir, that it would be giving up the very point

which I am chiefly to plead, if I ſhould enter into the merits of the cauſe ſo far as to conſider the particulars contained in this book, whether they are juſt or unjuſt, true or falſe. But I muſt beg leave to conſider a little in general, whether the crime of which they think proper to ſuſpect me, was ſo certainly and ſelf-evidently relevant that they might take it for granted, and inſert it in their minutes, without ſo much as having the book before them, or mentioning the offenſive paſſages; which I ſhould think were neceſſary even in the worſt book that can be conceived—and to all this join my name without ſuffering me to be heard.

And here, Sir, I ſhould think that modeſty and common decency might have led them to determine otherwiſe. Had they not before themſelves the unanimous application of a large and numerous people to call me to be their miniſter? Did not theſe people know of the rumour of my being author of this book, before they entered into this reſolution? and are they all ſo abandoned as to call an enemy to all rules to watch for their ſouls? Did not the preſbytery know, that the perſon ſo ſuſpected had been a member of a preſbytery for ſome years after the ſuſpicion began? that he had been a member of this ſynod with themſelves? nay, a member of the ſupreme court of this church, and no notice taken of it at all? nay, are they ſo ignorant as not to know, that a very great majority of this nation find no fault with the book at all? and any perſon profeſſing himſelf the author, would not thereby in the leaſt degree forfeit their eſteem. Pray, Sir, was it, is it, could it be juſt in this caſe, to conclude it cri-

minal without debate or examination? I mean not by this to juſtify the book in every particular; perhaps, if it comes to be examined, I may join in condemning it, at leaſt ſome parts; but I inſiſt that this ſhews the precipitateneſs, the partiality, and injuſtice of the preſbytery, in the ſentence which they paſſed. It looks as if they themſelves were ſtruck at in the performance, and acted as intereſted perſons. And indeed I would gladly aſk them, whether they think themſelves pointed at in the pamphlet? and if they think ſo, and at the ſame time aſcribe it to me, whether it is juſt and equitable that they ſhould be my judges who are ſuppoſed to be aggrieved?

There is another general conſideration, that ſhews how unjuſt and precipitate this ſentence was, and that there is really no belief of the thing being ſo criminal as they have taken for granted, among thoſe who muſt be moſt unprejudiced and impartial judges. It is read in England, and the preſbytery of Paiſley do, or may know the ſentiments that are entertained of it there. I have been well informed that the preſent Biſhop of London, in converſation with a nobleman of our own country, gave it great commendation; and withal added, it ſeems only directed at a certain party in the church of Scotland, but we want not very many in the church of England, to whom the characters are very applicable. And, Sir, I have ſeen a letter from the Rev. Mr Warburton to a miniſter in Scotland, and it has been ſeen by ſeveral miniſters here preſent, in which he commends the performance, and particularly calls it a fine piece of raillery againſt a party to

which, says he, we are no strangers here. Is it to be supposed, Sir, that distinguished persons for worth and penetration would commend and approve a thing so evidently criminal as the presbytery of Paisley are pleased to think? Are persons of the character there represented to be found in the church of England? Where, then, is the church of Scotland's charter of security, that none shall ever arise in her deserving such a reprimand? Shall such names as these mentioned, openly affirm that there are such in England? and must the man be condemned, without hearing and without mercy, who is but suspected of hinting that there may be such in her sister church? I have often, indeed, since the commencement of this business, reflected on the different situation of affairs in Scotland and England. I have seen I know not how many books in England, printed with the authors names, which plainly, and without ambiguity, affirm, that there are some of the clergy proud, ambitious, time-servers, and tools to those in power; some of them lazy and slothful, lovers of ease and pleasure; some of them scandalous and dissolute in their manners; some ignorant and insufficient—and these things they affirm without the least danger, or apprehension of it; but, I believe, were I to publish a book that had the tenth part of such severity in it in Scotland, I ought at the same time to have a ship hired to flee to another country. I shall not pretend to account for this difference, but only affirm, and I am myself a standing evidence that it doth really subsist; and at the same time it is attended by a very odd circumstance,

for reproaches are criminal when thrown out by one ſet againſt the other, but not in the leaſt ſo when thrown out, or thrown back, by that other againſt the firſt. Many here preſent will remember what a ſet of overtures were brought into this ſynod in April 1753, by ſome of the very perſons who are now ſtanding at the bar: one of them ſet forth the grievous crime of bringing our public differences with one another into the pulpit; and yet, ſtrange to think, the only ſermon that ever I heard in my life in which this was done, was by one of my preſent accuſers, who, Sir, fell bloodily upon thoſe miniſters who bawl out againſt the law of the land as a grievance, inſtead of giving it that obedience which becomes good ſubjects. It indeed was his ignorance to find fault with that expreſſion which is uſed even by the ſacred infallible General Aſſembly, in the annual inſtructions to their commiſſioners. Is it not alſo well known, that a pamphlet was publiſhed, called, "The Juſt View of the Conſtitution," which common, uncontradicted fame, which is not my caſe, attributes to Mr H——, and publiſhed many months before the one for which I am now accuſed? This pamphlet repreſents us all, in general, as not acting upon conſcience, but from a love of popularity, or in the words of the ingenious Mr T[illegible] of Gowan, "not conſcience, but a ſpirit of faction and a love of dominion." And, beſides this, it tells a ſtory, which it calls a ſcene of iniquity, with the initial letters of the names of the perſons concerned. Was ever this pamphlet charged by theſe gentlemen, my oppo[illegible], as contrary to the intereſt of religion? At

the ſame time, I ſhould be glad to know what it is that makes the diſcovery of a ſcene of iniquity, if committed by ſome whom I muſt not name, contrary to the intereſt of religion; but the diſcovery of a ſcene of iniquity, ſuppoſed to be committed by Mr Webſter, or ſome others of us, nothing contrary to it at all. I am not able to diſcover any reaſon for this difference of judgment, but one that is not very honourable to them, viz. Theſe ſcenes of iniquity ſuppoſed to be committed by them, are more probable in themſelves, and actually obtain more credit, than thoſe which they throw out againſt us. I do not affirm that that is the reaſon, but I think, ſince they have been the aggreſſors, both in cenſuring us for ſcrupling obedience to ſome of their deciſions, and attacking our characters in print, if ſome nameleſs author has with great ſucceſs retaliated the injury of the laſt kind, they ought to lie as quietly under it as poſſible, both from equity and prudence—from equity, becauſe they have given the provocation; from prudence, becauſe it will bring many to ſay, that charge muſt have been juſt, or it would have been treated with contempt; ſurely that ſtroke muſt have been well aimed, the wound muſt have been very deep, ſince the ſcar continues ſo long, and is never like to be either forgotten or forgiven.

But, Sir, I muſt confeſs I am amazed at the boldneſs, as well as the violence of thoſe gentlemen, conſidering the land in which we live. Is it not, and do we not glory in its being a land of liberty? Is it then a land of civil liberty, and yet of eccleſiaſtical tyranny? Muſt not a man have equity and

juſtice in the church, as well as the ſtate? Are there not every day publiſhed in this nation, as ſevere, nay, much ſeverer cenſures, of the greateſt characters in the kingdom, and poſſeſſing the higheſt offices? Are there not attacks upon our ſovereign himſelf, and his auguſt family, many times made in print, and yet paſſed unheeded? and muſt the leaſt attempt to ſhew that there are corruptions among the clergy, be an unpardonable crime? I have ſeen it inſiſted on in print, that as ſoon as the liberty of the preſs is taken away, there is an end of every ſhadow of liberty. And as of late years it hath been very frequent to borrow from what is cuſtomary in the civil government, and apply it to the church, I ſhall beg leave to borrow this maxim, and to affirm, that ſo ſoon as it is not permitted in general to laſh the characters of churchmen, there is eſtabliſhed a ſacerdotal tyranny, which always was, and always will be, of the moſt cruel, relentleſs, and illegal kind. But the worſt of all is ſtill behind, which I am aſhamed to mention in the preſence of ſo many of the laity, becauſe of the reproach which it brings upon our church. There have been publiſhed among us writings directly levelled againſt religion itſelf, taking away the very foundation of morality, bringing in doubt the being of God, and treating our Redeemer's name with contempt and deriſion. Writings of this kind have been publicly avowed, with the author's name prefixed. Where has been the zeal of the preſbytery of Paiſley againſt ſuch writings? Have they moved for the exerciſe of diſcipline againſt the authors? Have they ſupported the motion when made by

others? I am afraid, Sir, this profecution will give many juſt ground to ſay, as was ſaid an age ago by Moliere in France, and by ſome there upon occaſion of his writings, that a man may write againſt God Almighty what he pleaſes, in perfect ſecurity, but if he write againſt the characters of the clergy in power, he is ruined for ever.

I am ſenſible, Sir, that they have ſaid, even at this bar, as indeed they and their emiſſaries in converſation have often alleged, that the quarrel they have at the pamphlet, is its hurtful tendency to the intereſt of religion; nay, they have often ſaid, that one who could write in that ſtyle and manner againſt his brethren, cannot poſſibly be a good man; and that has been commonly ſaid, even upon the ſuppoſition of the truth of the facts and characters contained in the book. This, Sir, I would have had nothing to do with, but would have ſuffered the book to anſwer for itſelf, ſince its author does not think proper to appear in its defence, if they had not been pleaſed to load me with the ſuſpicion of it. For removing this odium, by which alone it is that they have made an impreſſion on ſome good men, I obſerve in general, that it is not conceivable that a thing ſhould be a certain mark of a bad man, which is approved by, and conveys no ſuch idea to ſo great a number of unqueſtionable characters. But, beſides, let us conſider a little the nature of the thing: 1. It is written ironically. 2. It is ſuppoſed to attack the characters and credit of a part of the clergy of the church of Scotland. As to the firſt of theſe, far be it from me to aſſert that ridicule is the teſt of truth. Many here preſent know how uni-

formly, and how ſtrenuouſly I have maintained the contrary. It is, however, many times uſeful to diſgrace known falſehood, and ſuch practices as to be deſpiſed need only to be expoſed; that it is a lawful thing to make ſuch an uſe of it, is evident from the higheſt authority. There are many inſtances of irony in the ſacred writings. In Gen. iii. 22. we have an expreſſion put into the mouth of God himſelf, which many, perhaps moſt interpreters, ſuppoſe to be an irony; and as it is of the moſt ſevere and cutting kind, in a moſt deplorable caſe, ſo I do not ſee that another interpretation can be put upon the words: "And the Lord God ſaid, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." The conduct of Elijah, and his treatment of the prophets of Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 27. is another example of the ſame kind: "And it came to paſs at noon that Elijah mocked them, and ſaid, Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he ſleepeth, and muſt be awaked." There are a good many inſtances of it in the prophets, which I omit, to ſave time, as the thing is undeniable, and only further mention an expreſſion of our Saviour himſelf, who, though a man of ſorrows and in a ſtate of humiliation, yet in ſome places uſes a language plainly ironical, as in John x. 31. "Many good works have I ſhewed you from my Father, for which of theſe works do ye ſtone me?"

And as the inſtances of ſuch writing in the word of God, ſufficiently warrants the uſe of it, ſo it is founded upon the plaineſt reaſon. There are two diſtinct qualities of truth and piety; a divine beauty,

which renders them amiable, and a holy majesty, which renders them venerable: and there are also two distinct qualities of error and impiety; a criminal guilt, which renders them the object of horror, and a delusion and folly, which renders them silly and contemptible—and it is fit and proper that the children of God should have both of these sentiments of hatred and contempt with regard to them. And the last is often necessary, as well as the first, in combating corruptions. There is, for ordinary, a pride and self-sufficiency in wicked men, which makes them deaf to advice, and impregnable to sober and serious reasoning; nor is there any getting at them, till their pride is levelled a little with this dismaying weapon. Many of the ancient fathers of the Christian church, both used this manner of writing, and asserted its necessity. There is one passage of Tertullian which I shall translate, because it is very much to the purpose. "There are many things which ought to be treated with contempt and mockery, through fear of giving them weight, and making them too important by seriously debating them. Nothing more is due to vanity than derision; (and it belongs to the truth to smile, because it is cheerful, and to despise its enemies, because it is assured of victory.) It is true, that we ought to be careful that the raillery be not low and unworthy of the truth; but if that is taken care of, and we can make use of it with address and delicacy, it is a duty to do so." To this I shall add another passage from St Augustine: "Who will dare to say that the truth ought to remain defenceless against the attacks of falsehood? That the enemies of reli-

gion ſhall be permitted to terrify the faithful with ſtrong words, and to entice and ſeduce them by agreeable terms of wit; but that believers ought never to write, but with ſuch a coldneſs of ſtyle as to lull the reader aſleep?"

Enough ſurely has been ſaid in defence of the manner of writing; and as to the ſubject of it, attacking the characters of clergymen, I am altogether at a loſs to know what is that argument in reaſon, or that precept in Scripture, which makes it criminal to cenſure them when they deſerve it. That their ſtation, like that of all other perſons of influence, or in public employment, ſhould make men very tender and cautious how they take up an evil report againſt them, and never to do it except upon good ground, I allow; but when the church is really bad, I hold it as a juſt principle, that as it is in them doubly criminal, and doubly pernicious, ſo it ought to be expoſed with double ſeverity. And this is ſo far from being contrary to the intereſts of religion, that nothing can be more honourable to it, than to ſhew that there are ſome ſo bold as to reprove, and ſo faithful as to withſtand the corruptions of others. How far ſecret wickedneſs ſhould be concealed, and ſcenes of iniquity not laid open, and ſo ſin turned into ſcandal in miniſters, is a matter that would require a very careful and accurate diſcuſſion, and admit of many exceptions; but if in any caſe erroneous doctrine, or degeneracy of life, is plain and viſible, to render them completely odious muſt be a duty; and when it is not done, it makes men conclude we are all combined together, like Demetrius and the craftſmen, and more con-

cerned for our own power and credit, than the intereſt and benefit of thoſe committed to our charge. Thoſe who think that no good man can attack the character of the clergy, I would juſt remind of the attack made upon the Jeſuits in France, about one hundred years ago, by the gentlemen of the Port-Royal, a ſociety of Janſeniſts of great parts and eminent piety, particularly by Monſieur Paſcal, in his Provincial Letters, which are written almoſt entirely in the way of ridicule; and the very objection was made againſt them by the Jeſuits at that time, that is now made againſt this piece. Will any man now conclude from them, that Paſcal was a bad man, whom all hiſtory teſtifies to have been as pious and unbiaſſed to the world as any of his time?

I hope, Sir, what hath been ſaid thus in general on the ſpecies of writing, and the ſubject of this book, will convince every impartial member of this ſynod, that the preſbytery of Paiſley have acted in a moſt unjuſt and illegal manner, in paſſing the ſentence they have done upon it in my abſence, and without any examination. It is neceſſary that I ſhould now alſo ſpeak a little to the method of inquiry which they reſolved upon, by appointing a committee of their number privately to interrogate me. And indeed, Sir, the method is ſo full of abſurdity and tyranny, that I know not well where to begin in ſpeaking upon it. They have no where indeed told what were to be the conſequences, if their ſuſpicions were found to be juſt. Perhaps the preſbytery of Paiſley would have paſſed ſentence of depoſition againſt me in my abſence, which would

have been but ending as they began, contrary to law and juſtice. But, whatever were their particular intentions, by their violent and illegal ſtretches of power in falling upon it, they were plainly of the worſt kind; and it always put me in mind of a friar of the inquiſition, with an unhappy perſon before them, whom they want to convict that they may burn him, ſtroking him, and ſaying to him in the ſpirit of meekneſs, Confeſs, my ſon, confeſs!

Sir, if theſe gentlemen ſuppoſed me endued with the leaſt degree of common underſtanding, this method was exceſſively abſurd; and whether they did or not, it was full of injuſtice. This committee being appointed by the court, and the appointment inſerted on the records of the preſbytery, I juſt aſk, were they not to make a report to the next meeting of the preſbytery, of all their private converſation with me? Would not this alſo be ingroſſed in the minutes, and make a part of the proceſs under their cognizance? Could I be preſent at their next meeting, to be the leaſt check or controul upon their report? or would they regard any of my corrections of their committee's report, if I could? In this ſituation, no man of common ſenſe would have had any converſation with them but by writing, ſo that he might be ſure nothing would be reported but his own words. For I would not truſt the moſt impartial perſon in the world to report any converſation with me, upon a matter in which he ſeemed to be keenly intereſted, or to have very different ſentiments from me. The power of prejudice would give a tincture to the repreſentation; nay, the leaſt forgetfulneſs would create ſome variance. And if

they ſuppoſed me ſimple enough to converſe with them, what muſt they have been to take ſuch advantage of my ſimplicity?

Further, Sir, this method of inquiry was very abſurd, becauſe ſelf-contradictory. They load a man with the ſuſpicion of writing a book contrary to the intereſt of religion, and containing many falſehoods, and then they pretend to aſk this man if he had done ſo, ſaying that they will be well ſatisfied if he ſhall deny it. Theſe ſuppoſitions deſtroy one another. If his veracity be ſo entirely to be depended on, either he muſt not be the author of the book, or it is impoſſible it can contain the falſehoods that are alleged; for if he will lie in print to defame his brethren, he will ſurely never ſcruple to lie in converſation to ſave himſelf from ruin. Therefore, Sir, I do affirm, that appointing a committee to confer with me was highly abſurd, or Jeſuitically cunning. For if my word is ſo much to be depended on as they give out, it is a clear and complete vindication of me from their charge, and that out of their own mouths. But perhaps they were more cunning than abſurd, and intended firſt to make me deny the thing formally, and then adduce it as a proof, and to aggravate the crime.

But, Sir, they pretend that in this they are only acting in the ſpirit, and following the rules of the goſpel, particularly that rule of our Saviour, "If thy brother treſpaſs againſt thee," &c. It is ſurpriſing to hear any ſpeaking in the name of ſuch a body make uſe of this argument. I would not give my judgment for having a man to preach the goſpel, who is capable of giving ſuch an interpretation to that text.

It evidently and undeniably relates only to private offence or perſonal injury. "If thy brother treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother." Here, Sir, nobody has any thing to do with it but the perſon injured; if by confeſſion or reparation he is ſatisfied, the matter is ended. But will any man ſay, that this is to be applied to caſes public in their nature, and againſt which, if true, a proceſs and public cenſure is intended? If any of the preſbytery of Paiſley, ſuppoſing themſelves pointed at in that book, had previouſly come to me when the report roſe; or ſuppoſe they had at any time, as private perſons, ſpoke to me on the ſubject, they would have found no man more ready to commune with them, and give them all ſatisfaction due from one Chriſtian to another. But, Sir, after proceeding as a court in the manner above repreſented; after illegally finding it criminal, and making it the ground of ſtopping a ſettlement—then to appoint a committee privately to interrogate me as to the fact, it is, in my humble opinion, a violation of juſtice for them to attempt it, a perverſion of the word of God to build it upon that text, and it would be yielding up the natural rights of mankind, if I ſhould be ſo tame as to ſubmit to it.

Again, Sir, they pretend that their conduct is exactly conformable to the form of proceſs, and the practice founded upon it in the caſe of other ſcandals, where the very firſt means of proof is dealing with the accuſed perſon's conſcience, to bring him to a confeſſion. And here, Sir, I muſt ſay before this ſynod, that I am not only humbly willing to

ſtand or fall by this form of proceſs, but that I am reſolved to aſſert and maintain my right to be judged by it, and by it alone, and not by the arbitrary proceedings of ſome modern clergymen. A general obſervation is neceſſary here, that this form of proceſs doth univerſally proceed upon ſcandals, the relevancy of which is acknowledged, and cannot be denied. Now, this is by no means the caſe here, as is evident from my continuing ſo long in the miniſterial character after the riſe of the report, as well as many other conſiderations ſuggeſted above; and therefore, at any rate, the relevancy muſt be firſt proved, before there can be any propriety of aſking for a confeſſion, and dealing with the conſcience. It is true, they have in their minutes found the relevancy; but whether this has been according to the rules in the form of proceſs, I could almoſt allow even themſelves to be judges; for I dare ſay they would hardly do it a ſecond time.

But now, after we have left this in its full force, let us ſuppoſe that the matter objected were only of a ſcandalous nature, and let us go to the 7th chapter in the form of proceſs concerning miniſters, and ſee whether the method there preſcribed has been obſerved in this caſe. But, Sir, as the whole affair is full of irregularity, and involved in darkneſs and confuſion by the precipitate or artful conduct of the preſbytery, ſo there is a particular difficulty which ariſes from the ſtrange and ambiguous light in which they appear. Thoſe who read the ſtyle and directions of the form of proceſs, will plainly ſee that ſuch a caſe as that now before you, was never con-

templated by the compilers of it. It is difficult to say, whether they are to be considered as private Christians offended and accusing, or the occasion of the accusation, or as a church court taking the affair under their cognizance for judgment. They seem to have considered themselves as both. This I can never yield to; but they shall be at liberty to be either of them they think proper. And so I shall consider them first in the one light, and then in the other.

1. If they be considered as Christians offended, and the accusers or occasion of the accusation, the rule is to be found in the 4th part of the 7th chapter of the form of process, "All Christians," &c. Here then, Sir, I complain of them, that they have not done as Christians, not even what they resolved to do as a court, and very much out of time. Have they been wary in accusing me? Have they abstained from publishing or spreading the scandal? Have they, these three years bypast, conversed with me on the subject? Have they not in the controversy every where called it a heinous crime, though they knew that was far from being generally yielded, and would not probably be yielded by me? Nay, now instead of privately conversing with me, during the seven weeks delay of the affair, without assigning a reason, have they not recorded it in their register? Have they not made it a part of a process, disqualifying mé for a call? I leave any one to judge, whether this was following the rule laid down in the form of process. Besides, they act not only as private persons, but judges; or at least are making the inquiry themselves, that they may know

whether they may desire the presbytery of Irvine to do it after them.

2. Let us consider them as a church court, taking the affair under their cognizance for judgment. Here, to be sure, there is a monstrous impropriety. For, supposing them to have taken ever so just steps in other respects, I was never before them, I cannot be before them, I am not subject to them. Yet, Sir, as it cannot be before the synod in any other way than they have been pleased to take it up in, let us see how agreeable it is to the form of process, and whether they are ready to deal with me for a confession. The form of process mentions three ways of taking up a scandal against a minister. The two first none pretends to hold in this case; the last is, part 3, last clause, "that the *fama clamosa*," &c. Now, can any man say that this condition holds in the present case. Is this so scandalous in the eyes of the people, that a presbytery would be reproached if they let it pass. If there be any such *fama*, it is very silent; for I never heard of any fault found with the presbytery of Irvine, to whom it naturally fell to do it. On the contrary, I do affirm, because I am able to prove, that the presbytery of Paisley's taking it up, with very many, brings reproach upon them. Again, do they follow the rule prescribed even when that condition exists? Have they inquired into the rise, occasion, branches and grounds, of this *fama clamosa*? This they were the more bound to do, that it is far from being an uncontradicted *fama*; so far from it, that the very prevailing *fama* is, not that I am the author, but some how concerned in it. They

themſelves expreſs it ſome ſuch way in their minutes. This makes all the arguments about their paſſing over the relevancy every way ſtrong; becauſe a man might have ſome acceſſion to the publiſhing of a book in which ſome very bad things were; and without examination, or ſpecifying what this acceſſion was, it would be very hard to judge him guilty of the worſt, or of the whole. To ſay the truth, ſome of their wellwiſhers have made it a very diſhonourable *fama* for me, ſaying that I helped to contrive the miſchief, to collect the calumnies, but had not ſkill enough to give it its dreſs and form. Should not they have inquired then into the grounds of this *fama?* and have they ever done it?

Further, in the fifth paragraph of that chapter of the form of proceſs, it is expreſsly appointed, that even after a proceſs is begun upon a *fama clamoſa*, the court muſt give a liberal and competent time to anſwer it; and the accuſed perſon is to be heard upon the relevancy. This is, Sir, upon the relevancy in the way the facts are laid, even concerning a thing confeſſedly ſcandalous; and all this, before the court are to endeavour to bring him to a confeſſion. From this, then, it is clear and evident, that however lawful or prudent it might be for private perſons to commune with a man himſelf, till this be done, there is no warrant from the form of proceſs for a court to appoint any examination and inquiry; on the contrary, it is making, inſtead of mending a ſcandal. And if this is the rule in caſes confeſſedly of a ſcandalous nature, it holds much more ſtrongly in what is now before you.

The truth is, this is not only the order of proceeding expreſsly laid down with regard to miniſters, but it is common equity, and in ſubſtance the ſame with the caſe of ſcandal in all other caſes, and with reſpect to all other perſons. For though when a particular accuſer againſt a man appears, laying to his charge a groſs crime, ſuch as uncleanneſs, it ſeems to be due to his own character, as well as to the Public, that he ſhould profeſs innocence; yet it often happens, that when the accuſation appears wanton and malicious, he puts the accuſer upon the proof, and refuſes to give any other ſatisfaction. And whenever any perſon does ſo, though the court may think it obſtinacy and ſtatelineſs, or that they cannot fully approve his conduct, yet they never condemn him on that account, but diſmiſs the proceſs for want of ſufficient light. And I have ſeen ſeveral caſes of this ſort, in which the court abſolutely refuſed to put a man to his oath, or even aſk him if he was willing to ſwear, unleſs there were ſome more preſumption than the bare accuſation. And indeed this is required in the form of proceſs. This, however, is ſtating the caſe too ſtrongly. But if there be no particular accuſer, but a vague and general *fama*, would it be tolerable for a court to call any gentleman whom they ſhall be pleaſed to ſuſpect, and put him upon an inquiry, whether he was ever guilty of the ſin of uncleanneſs? I dare ſay ſuch a meaſure would be deteſted by every reaſonable man.

But you will ſay, here is a *corpus debiti*. Then let me ſuppoſe a caſe exactly parallel—that a child were expoſed in a gentleman's neighbourhood, no

mother appearing or accuſing, but an idle rumour ariſes, that perhaps it may be his, or it may have been ſomebody about his houſe, and he acceſſary to the commiſſion of the crime; would it in that caſe be reaſonable and juſt, would it be according to the form of proceſs, to call him, and interrogate him, whether he had ever, or for twelve months preceding, been guilty of the crime of uncleanneſs—without making any previous inquiry as to the riſe of the affair, or probability of the imputation? So, in this caſe, here is a child of the brain expoſed to the world; the mother, that is to ſay, the preſs or the publiſher, accuſes nobody, nay, pretends that it is lawfully begotten. A vague rumour lays it to me. This hath never been inquired into, though the firſt broacher of it might eaſily be found; and yet I muſt be interrogated by a court to whom I am not ſubject, with whom, as yet, as a court, I have nothing to do. In ſhort, Sir, what I would do if I were ſo irregularly attacked, and charged with a crime highly and confeſſedly ſcandalous, I do not know, and hope I ſhall never have occaſion to deliberate upon it. But in this vague and illegal accuſation of a doubtful crime, and a crime, perhaps, chiefly or only in the eyes of thoſe who accuſe me and their adherents, I hope I will be approved by every impartial perſon in ſtanding up for the rights of mankind, and refuſing to anſwer *ſuper enquirendis*.

I could here put the ſynod in mind of a queſtion of this nature, which came before the church of Scotland in Profeſſor S———'s proceſs. He refuſed to anſwer ſome queries put to him by the preſ-

bytery of Glaſgow, although they aroſe from, and were founded upon ſome writings given in by himſelf. This was debated before the Aſſembly, and rejected by them, as they would give no encouragement to inquiſitorial proceedings.

But, Sir, nothing can demonſtrate more clearly the iniquity of ſuch practices, than what happened not long ago in this very preſbytery, which is but little known, but which I am able to bring to light. And after I have narrated it, I leave it to the judgment of the ſynod, whether they will countenance with their authority any ſimilar practice in another caſe. When Mr C——— was preſented to the Abbey Church of Paiſley, there were ſome rumours raiſed, I know not how, as if he had been guilty of ſome practices tending to diſaffection. Theſe, I may ſafely ſay, were not diſcouraged by the preſbytery, but mentioned again and again in their minutes; and though the candidate inſiſted much upon a regular judgment upon the relevancy, and an inquiry, they ſtill ſhifted both, and, inſtead thereof, appointed a conference with him. And what think you were the queſtions they put to him to remove the ſcandal?—Where did you learn your Engliſh? and what miniſter of the eſtabliſhed church did you hear? Where did you learn your Latin? and in whoſe houſe did you ſtay? Did you ever go near the Epiſcopal meeting-houſe all the time you were at the profeſſion of divinity? Did Mr H——— or Mr R———, Epiſcopal miniſters, recommend you to C———'s family? Did your father attend ordinances in the pariſh church where he lived? Have you any near relations that are related to the mini-

ſters of this church? We aſk this, ſay they, that we may know the diſpoſitions of your friends. What could be the intention of theſe queſtions? What could be the effect of their being anſwered, one way or the other? Might not the moſt loyal man in Britain be brought under an odium in this manner? I flatter myſelf I am of as untainted, unſuſpected loyalty, as any man in the preſbytery of Paiſley, and yet I could not affirm that I had never lodged in a diſaffected perſon's houſe, nor had the friendſhip of any ſuch; nor that I never came near the Epiſcopal meeting-houſe all the time I was at the profeſſion of divinity. And did not theſe gentlemen know that ſuch things were perfectly frivolous and irrelevant? Yes, Sir, they knew it well; but ſtill they ſerved their purpoſe of diſobliging that people, and infuſing jealouſies. And ſo they myſteriouſly expreſs themſelves in their anſwer to the reaſons of appeal, that there are ſuch unhappy circumſtances in the preſentee's character, as do not recommend him to the choice of this people. I will not ſay, Sir, that all I have above repreſented is now to be found in their regiſter, for they have a ſalutary art of expunging from their minutes any thing that is diſhonourable to themſelves; but this I will ſay, it actually happened, and a great deal more. And I dare ſay, if there be any Epiſcopalian here preſent, he will inſtantly add to his litany, From ſuch Spaniſh Preſbyterians, good Lord deliver us!

Thus, Sir, I hope I have made it appear, that the preſbytery of Paiſley have been guilty of moſt irregular procedure, and flagrant injuſtice to me, in

paſſing a ſentence upon my character, where they had no title to judge me; in finding a relevancy without examination of the ſubject, and when I could not be heard in my defence; and, laſtly, in appointing an inquiſition for diſcovering the fact, directly in the face of law and equity.

I am ſorry I have detained the ſynod ſo long, Sir, but could not poſſibly ſpeak to this involved, perplexed accuſation, in ſhorter time; and I hope the importance of the cauſe to me, will plead for ſome indulgence, and procure your attention for a very few minutes longer, and then I have done. Let me, Sir, ſpeak plainly out: whatever may be pretended about the intereſt of religion being concerned in the fate of this pamphlet, there is ſtrong reaſon to ſuſpect, that it is the credit of a party that is really at ſtake. We all know that there are very great differences of ſentiment among us, as to the government of the church; and it ſeems to be my misfortune, to be of oppoſite principles from ſeveral members of this preſbytery on that point. This is the cauſe of my being charged with ill-nature and unpeaceableneſs. They themſelves, Sir, will not pretend to give any other inſtance of this temper; and I confeſs, that as I reckon the glory of God, and the edification of his church, to be deeply concerned in the cauſe, I am reſolved, in his ſtrength, to maintain and ſupport it to the utmoſt of my power, ſo long as I draw breath; and if I have been a firebrand, as I have been ſometimes called, I wiſh I could anſwer the title, and burn their pernicious ſchemes even to aſhes. And, Sir, as in no

other caſe have I ever diſcovered any keenneſs of temper, ſo I truſt, that even in this, I have neither diſcovered an overbearing pride, or perverſeneſs of temper, but have ſupported what I eſteemed to be truth with reſolution, but without violence. I cannot pretend to the polite and courtly ſtyle, in the ſame degree with ſome of my oppoſers, yet have I endeavoured to preſerve the meekneſs of a Chriſtian, believing that the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God. Now, Sir, I beg every wiſe and honeſt man of the other ſide of the queſtion in our public differences, to determine ſeriouſly, whether he will approve of a preſbytery's making perſonal oppoſition, and becauſe a man is not in every reſpect of their way of thinking, barring his ſettlement to the utmoſt of their power; and whether it be decent, or truly moderate, not only to rebuke, ſuſpend, and deprive thoſe who cannot go with them, but, as the very laſt effort of tyranny, to attempt to caſt out any who are but ſuſpected of debating the point in writing.

Farther, I beg every man in this houſe, to lay his hand upon his heart, and ſay this day, in his judgment, whether he will, in order to reach a man of a different party from himſelf, approve of going contrary to all form and law, and eſtabliſhing a precedent of inquiſition. However ſecure ſome may think themſelves and their party at preſent, there is ſuch an inſtability in all human things, that the engines which they prepare againſt others may be directed againſt themſelves. I know a fear of this kind, for the moſt part, operates but weakly upon mens' minds, becauſe the cauſes that may afterwards

caſt up cannot be clearly diſcerned, being hidden in the darkneſs of futurity; but, Sir, he is the wiſeſt man that acts with moſt prudence, and does not expoſe himſelf or his friends to the law of retaliation. This I ſpeak in perfect ſecurity as to myſelf, for if the church ſhall find that interrogation is a proper way of inquiring into facts, it will but open to me a larger field of information; and though it come to the real merits of this cauſe, the trial of the relevancy of this crime objected to me will take up at leaſt ſeven years, in proceſſes of various kinds.

To conclude, Sir, though I will never approve of, or give my conſent for eſtabliſhing a practice which I think unjuſt and tyrannical, yet as to my own caſe, I will even ſubmit to be interrogated by this very party, upon this juſt, this ſelf-evidently juſt condition, that the miniſters of that preſbytery do ſubmit themſelves to be interrogated by me in turn, on their doctrine, their diligence in paſtoral duty, their care and government of their families, and their perſonal truth. If they will yield to this, I will anſwer upon oath, either inſtantly, or upon a month's preparation, not only as to this point, but all that they ſhall think fit to aſk, as to my character, from my birth to this day. And if this condition be refuſed, the equity of their conduct I leave to the judgment of this venerable ſynod.

AN

# HUMBLE SUPPLICATION

TO SUCH OF

THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY OF SCOTLAND AS ARE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH, AND MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

MUCH HONOURED,

YOU will surely be sensible, that it must have been a very urgent necessity that has compelled a man of my station and profession to become an author, especially when I address myself to you, whose circumstances set you at so great a distance from me, and may, without that candour and condescension on your part, provoke you to contemn that advice which is offered voluntarily, and from such a hand. And indeed there is nothing of which I am more firmly persuaded, than that the affairs of the church of Scotland are drawing fast towards a crisis, and that a little time will determine whether

ſhe will ſink or ſwim. This view of things cannot fail to conſtrain every one who hath any regard to her proſperity and welfare, of which number I hope I ſhall always be, ſo long as I draw breath, to exert himſelf to the utmoſt for her ſupport, and alſo to ſpread the alarm, and call on others to aſſiſt, who have more ability and opportunity to be uſeful.

On this occaſion I am emboldened to addreſs myſelf to you, not only as by your quality and ſtation you are able to contribute much to a change of the meaſures that have lately prevailed, but as your office of elders in the church may be preſumed to incline you to be ready and active for her proſperity and ſupport. I intended once to have ſtyled you *brethren*, becauſe I alſo am an elder, but was afraid of giving offence by too forward and aſſuming an introduction: however, I ſtill hope for ſome regard in conſequence of this relation, becauſe I have ever obſerved, that a likeneſs of character, a participation of the ſame office, or indeed a likeneſs in almoſt any conſiderable circumſtance, creates a kind of connection, and produces a ſympathy or fellow-feeling, between the very higheſt and loweſt that fall under the ſame denomination. The inhabitants of the ſame city, though very different in their ſtations, reckon themſelves intereſted in one another. Thoſe of the ſame corporation are ſtill more cloſely connected. And there is a certain ſociety, comprehending perſons of very diſtant characters in other reſpects, who are ſaid to have an extraordinary tenderneſs for each other's concerns—the ſociety I mean is that of Free-maſons; for I am told a Free-

maſon, though a king, will ſhew a very great affection for a brother, although a beggar, or at leaſt the next thing to it, if there be no real beggars in that community.

It is not without a very important deſign that I have mentioned this, for I have obſerved ſome of late have endeavoured to ſtate a diſtinction, or perhaps I may call it, to ſow ſedition, between the great elders of our church and the ſmaller. Many, who are not wanting in an humble, if not ſervile reſpect, to the elders that ſurround the commiſſioner's throne in the aſſembly houſe, make it their buſineſs to throw all the blame of the confuſion that attends the ſettlement of any pariſh, upon the elders of lower rank, whom I may call, in alluſion to the ſimilitude of Free-maſons, the operative members of the ſame ſociety. It is time, therefore, for us to ſpeak for ourſelves, and particularly to thoſe from whom, becauſe of our relation to them, of which I again boaſt, we may confidently expect a fair and impartial hearing.

One other ground of encouragement I have in my preſent repreſentation, viz. that many or moſt of our honourable elders are bred to the law. Now I find in the hiſtory of the goſpel, that it was a lawyer that took care of the body of our bleſſed Saviour, after it was crucified at the inſtigation of the prieſts. This is a paſſage recorded by all the four evangeliſts, and I hope one effect of its having a place in the Bible, will be the ſtirring up ſuch of our lawyers as have a ſhare in the management of public affairs, to reſcue the church, which is Chriſt's

myſtical body, from the tyrannical impoſitions of churchmen in power.

I have been conſidering with myſelf, whether I ought not to endeavour to raiſe my ſtyle a little when ſpeaking to your honours, above what was either neceſſary or proper when ſpeaking to thoſe of a lower rank and weaker capacity. But, upon mature deliberation, I am reſolved to continue in my old plain way, becauſe it is probable I ſhall acquit myſelf better in that than in any other. I have often obſerved, that when a countryman is called upon buſineſs to ſpeak to thoſe of high rank, if he behaves in a quiet way, makes as few motions as poſſible, and ſpeaks with ſimplicity, he paſſes very well; but if he begins to ſcrape with his right foot, and to imitate the manners of his betters, he expoſes himſelf to their deriſion. Should it happen that ſuch a man, upon his going out, hears a great loud laugh in the company he hath left, it is my opinion he ought to conclude they are making a jeſt of his ridiculous behaviour; and if he were permitted to return back, it is probable he would find one or two in the middle of the room mimicking his geſtures for the entertainment of the reſt; for there is not a more refined pleaſure to thoſe in high life, eſpecially the ladies, that apeing and deriding the manners of their inferiors. Nay, the ſame diſpoſition is to be found in all ranks, towards ſuch as are below them. Even we tradeſmen and merchants have learned to ſpeak with contempt of a low-lived fellow, by which we mean one in lower life than our own. This hath determined me, as I ſaid, to aim at nothing but plainneſs of ſpeaking; and it is

very poſſible it may happen in this, as in my former treatiſe, that to ſome I ſhall be found more plain than pleaſant.

The firſt point I am to apply to you upon, to which I humbly intreat your ſerious attention, is the manner of making ſettlements of miniſters in the ſeveral pariſhes throughout this church. It is not unknown to you, that this thing hath cauſed a great deal of confuſion in ſeveral corners of the country; that a great part of the people have, on that very account, ſeparated from the eſtabliſhed church; and many more have fallen into an indifference about religion, and given over attendance upon public inſtruction altogether. Now there are ſome things upon this ſubject that I muſt needs take for granted, becauſe I cannot find any thing more evidently true than they are in themſelves, by which I might prove them; ſuch as, that the inſtruction of a nation in religion is a matter of very great importance, and that you all believe it to be ſo; that there is no ground to hope that people will receive benefit by the inſtructions of thoſe whom they hate and abhor; and that it is impoſſible they can receive benefit from thoſe inſtructions which they will not hear. There is one thing more, which to me appears as evident as any of them, that no compulſion ought to be uſed to conſtrain mens' choice in matters of religion. From theſe I think it plainly follows, that violent ſettlements, that is to ſay, giving a man a ſtipend, with a charge to inſtruct and govern the people within a certain diſtrict, the whole of which people do abſolutely refuſe to ſubject themſelves to his miniſtry, are, to ſay the leaſt, abſolutely unpro-

fitable, and the money that is beſtowed upon the perſon ſo ſettled, is wholly thrown away.

There are not a few in whoſe hearing if I ſhould expreſs myſelf as above, they would immediately reply, All this is very true, and we are ſorry for it; but as the law now ſtands with regard to patronages, how can it be helped? Now, though I am far from being of theſe gentlemen's opinions, that this matter might not be made much better, even as the law now ſtands, if the church were ſo diſpoſed as I hope ſhortly to ſhew, yet I will ſuppoſe it for a little, and make a few reflections upon the conduct of many in that ſuppoſed ſituation.

And, firſt, they muſt forgive me if I ſay that I can by no means believe the hardſhip of the law of patronage lies very heavy upon their ſpirits, or at leaſt if it does, they ſupport themſelves under it with ſurpriſing firmneſs, and diſcover not the leaſt outward ſign of uneaſineſs. Are they ever heard to complain of it, unleſs in a conſtrained manner, when others mention it before them? Do they not ſhew all willingneſs to appoint ſuch ſettlements, to enforce them, to defend them? Do they in the leaſt diſcountenance ſuch probationers as accept of preſentures unconditionally, although it cannot be pretended that the law obliges any man to this? On the contrary, are not theſe the men whom they love and delight in, whoſe characters they celebrate for knowledge and underſtanding, and for diſintereſted virtue?

I do confeſs then I am apt to doubt the ſincerity of thoſe gentlemen, when they profeſs their ſorrow for the hardſhips they are under by the patronage

act; because some apparent tokens of their concern might have been expected, and are no where to be seen. But, alas! why am I expressing my suspicions of what is our situation? Things are changing so fast, that it is impossible to write even such a book as this with propriety, and suited to the times; for even since I wrote the above paragraph, I have received information from Edinburgh, which, if it had come before it was written, would have prevented the writing of it; and even, if not for mangling my own book, I would yet expunge it. I am assured, that last May it was openly professed by some in the Assembly, that presentures were, of all others, the best way of settling preachers; and that it was the *proto pseudon* of men of my principles to imagine otherwise. This *proto pseudon* is a phrase which I do not understand, and therefore must let it alone. It may be a phrase of some of the learned languages, and it may be of no language at all. However I have recorded it with great fidelity, as I am informed the gentleman pronounced it. And whatever is its particular signification, I suppose its general meaning is, that patronages are no grievance but a blessing. As therefore it is probable, that your lordships and honours have this many times affirmed to you, it is necessary that I should first attempt to prove what I thought had been self-evident, that we are in a bad situation, before I crave your assistance for our relief. — — — — —

# SPEECH

IN THE

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

ON THE

TRANSPORTATION OF DR C——.

MODERATOR,

AS it is usual for people to differ almost upon every subject, I am not surprised that there should be some in this Assembly, who are for appointing that this transportation shall take place; but I apprehend it is really ground of surprise to see the way in which they urge their opinion. They do not speak as if they were weighing and deliberating upon the cause, that they might be able to give a just determination; they do not speak as if clearly satisfied themselves, or as if they desired to convince others, and bring them over to their own

opinion; but they ſpeak in an overbearing manner, and preſs the concluſion with a viſible diſpleaſure at the time ſpent upon it, and impatience that any body ſhould differ from or contradict them. But as poſitiveneſs is ſeldom any ſtrong preſumption of a good cauſe, ſo I think it is very much miſplaced here; and as the quiet and comfort of a large pariſh immediately, and the whole country-ſide more remotely, depends upon our deciſion, I hope the aſſembly will not give it till after mature deliberation, and with real impartiality.

The firſt thing, no doubt, to be conſidered is, whether the commiſſion have exceeded their powers, that we may ſee whether we have room at all for the other queſtion, about the expediency of this tranſportation; and after reading the words of the aſſembly's remit, I cannot help being of opinion, with the great majority of the members of preſbytery, that the commiſſion had no power to determine this cauſe. Is it not plain that this is not the cauſe which was before the laſt aſſembly? and is it not confeſſed on all hands, that the commiſſion had no title to take in any cauſes but ſuch as were remitted to them? Is it not plain, that the words in any after queſtion relating to this ſettlement, are not to be found in it? It is alſo proper to obſerve, from the almoſt conſtant uſe of theſe words in the remits of the aſſembly, that they do not ſuppoſe that a queſtion relating to the ſame ſettlement with another, makes it the ſame cauſe. The anſwer made to this is, that it was a miſtake or omiſſion in the clerk of the aſſembly. Admitting, Sir, that this had been the caſe, it would be extremely wrong and

dangerous to approve the commiſſion in paying no regard to that legal defect, but taking in the cauſe. For the aſſembly itſelf to make free with, and deſpiſe eſtabliſhed forms of procedure, is of the very worſt conſequence. I have heard ſome honourable members, eminently ſkilled in the law, affirm, that for a court to deſpiſe even its own forms, is to make way for the admiſſion of many inſtances of great and real injuſtice. But for the commiſſion, which is a delegated court, ſo far to come over form as to take in a cauſe not remitted to them, is a bold tranſgreſſion with a witneſs; and, if allowed, muſt be attended with conſequences which it is impoſſible to foreſee, but can ſcarce be imagined worſe than they really will be in effect.

But, Sir, why ſhould any ſay this was either an omiſſion in the clerks, or an overſight in the laſt aſſembly? I am ſure, for my part, I think they would have done wrong had they done it in any other way. What is the reaſon of this clauſe, (or any after queſtion), when it is inſerted? It is after the part of the cauſe is decided, to prevent contentious people to protract a ſettlement by fooliſh and frivolous appeals upon every little interlocutor or reſolution of a preſbytery in carrying it into execution. But in this caſe, neither all the parties, nor the principal part of the cauſe itſelf, was before the aſſembly at all; and I dare ſay, we may all remember to have heard it given as the opinion of the moſt judicious members of this church, that it is a very wrong meaſure to refer any cauſe of moment to the commiſſion, that hath not been in a good meaſure

heard and underſtood by the aſſembly itſelf. Moderator, I beg leave further to ſay, that I hope this aſſembly will not authoriſe the commiſſion in making a long arm, to take in cauſes without ſufficient powers, becauſe the commiſſion is certainly the moſt unhappily conſtituted court of any in this church. I ſay this without intending, and I hope without giving offence to any body; for, ſuppoſing human nature in us to be juſt what it is in other people, the members of the commiſſion being ſo numerous, and ſpread over all Scotland, few of them attend voluntarily, and it is the eaſieſt thing in the world for intereſted perſons to bring up a number of a particular way of thinking, and they may carry any cauſe whatever.

Thus, Sir, it appears, that the ſentence of the commiſſion has plainly exceeded their powers in ſome meaſure, even by the confeſſion of the friends of this tranſportation. Let us conſider it a little in itſelf, and ſee if it is like to be ſo great a benefit, or ſo great an honour to this church, as that we ſhould either forgive the commiſſion the encroachment they have been guilty of, or ſhould now do ourſelves what they have formerly done in a precipitate and irregular manner. Upon this branch of the ſubject I am very much at a loſs, not what to ſay, if every thing were to be brought out that might be urged againſt it, but to bring the argument within ſome compaſs, and chiefly indeed to diſcover ſome hope of ſucceſs, by reaſoning from ſome common principles on which we ſhall generally agree.

Moderator, I take this opportunity of declaring before this aſſembly, that I have always had the

deepeſt ſenſe of the diſhonour and loſs of authority which this church has ſuffered, and what indeed is infinitely more, the injury which the ſouls of men have ſuffered, by many ſettlements in which we have ordained a paſtor without a people; at the ſame time, I am ſenſible that many worthy men and faithful miniſters look upon themſelves as under a neceſſity in ſome ſuch caſes from the law of patronage; and I am afraid many, from a habit of doing this where there is neceſſity, are unwilling to come out of the ſame tract, and continue to do it when there is no neceſſity at all.

Moderator, I deſire it may be obſerved, that I do not believe, and I know nobody ſo fooliſh as to believe what is commonly imputed to us, that any Chriſtian, as ſuch, has a right to call a miniſter on an eſtabliſhment. We know that nobody has any right to call a miniſter on an eſtabliſhment, excepting thoſe to whom the law gives it; neither would I contend that every man ought to have a right, though we had it in our power, to make laws upon that ſubject, ſince this ſeeming equality would be a vile inequality. But, Sir, I would chuſe to form my judgment upon a few principles, in which, I ſhould think, hardly any in this aſſembly would diſagree. Has not every man a natural right, well ſecured to him in this happy iſland, to judge for himſelf in matters of religion, and in fact to adhere to any miniſter he pleaſes? Is not the legal ſtipend intended to provide a ſufficient and uſeful paſtor to the people within the bounds of a certain pariſh? Can he be of much ſervice to them, if he be upon ill terms with them? or can he do them any at all

if they will not hear him? Does any body desire to compel them by penal or ecclesiastical laws to hear him? or would such forced religion be of any worth? Is not then the legal encouragement unhappily lost and misapplied by somebody's fault, when a minister is settled to whom nobody will adhere? Now, Sir, the inference that I would draw from these principles is no more than this, that decency, and our indispensable duty as a church court, requires us to make no such settlements but with regret, and never without a real necessity; and the cause we have now before us, is one in which no such necessity exists. It is a transportation, Sir, the expediency of which we are to judge of, and the person concerned is not only bound in duty, but can be easily compelled by law, to submit to our decision. The great argument that always has been used against this or the like reasoning, has been brought out in this cause, that the people were unreasonable and prejudiced, and have been stirred up by evil-minded persons. This argument, Sir, is so old and stale, that I am surprised people are not ashamed of it, and that the ingenuity of the lawyers has not been able to invent another that shall have the advantage of being new. How often have we heard from this bar, this parish would have been agreeably and peaceably settled, but very early a combination was formed—this is all in all, the rest follows of course. I am persuaded, Sir, from the certain knowledge of many particular instances in which this was alleged, that in nine cases of ten the allegation is false. One person in a parish or country side may be active, and it may be said with plausibility, that he is the main

ſpring of the oppoſition. Sir, it is very eaſy to lead a people according to their own inclinations; but it is not ſo eaſy as many ſeem to ſuppoſe, to change their inclinations and direct their choice. In the mean time, it is always forgotten that the argument is founded, not upon the cauſe or occaſion, but upon the reality of the averſion of the people to the miniſter.

Moderator, an argument that is made uſe of to perſuade us to order this tranſportation is, that if it ſhould be refuſed, it would encourage the people to reſiſt in other caſes. I am afraid, Sir, that the tame ſubmiſſion which indeed is faſt approaching, and which many ſeem ſo ardently to deſire, can never take place, till there is a total indifference about religion among all the members of the eſtabliſhed church: take our neighbour country of England as an example of that deſirable peace. But if this argument be laid as it ought to be, that people ſhould not be headſtrong and unreaſonable, it operates plainly the contrary way; for there is nothing whatever that would give us ſo much weight and influence with the people, as that we ſhew a proper tenderneſs to them, as we have opportunity. If we do not oppreſs them when we have it in our power to relieve them, we may expect to have ſome influence over them, when we are ſtraitened and diſtreſſed ourſelves.

Beſides, Sir, on this ſubject of the prejudices of the people, this pretence is carried a moſt unreaſonable and extravagant length, and nothing but the prejudice in themſelves could make men ſpeak in

ſuch a ſtyle. Many will needs have it to be prejudice, and groundleſs prejudice in a people, if they do not fall in with a man to be their miniſter, againſt whoſe life and doctrine they cannot bring any legal objection. Alas, Sir, all ſuch things are matters of election and choice, and not of legal proof. In illuſtration of the people's caſe, there is a very good example given, that a man would have juſt cauſe of complaint, if you ſhould force a phyſician upon him of whoſe ſkill he had no opinion, though he could not prove him inſufficient before the faculty.

But, Sir, as it would be wrong to attribute oppoſition to a miniſter's ſettlement in all caſes to groundleſs prejudice, I am ſorry to ſay it, but I am obliged in juſtice to ſay it, we have very little reaſon to do ſo in the preſent caſe. Even in the caſe of a probationer, when he abſolutely adheres to a preſentation, notwithſtanding the greateſt oppoſition from the people, it is but a ſorry mark of love to ſouls, and of that ſelf-denial which every Chriſtian ſhould continually maintain. Many things, however, may be ſaid in favour of a probationer; yet, Sir, for a ſettled miniſter not only to act this part, but to excel all that ever were before him, in a bold and inſolent contempt of the people, as plainly appears to be Dr C——'s caſe, is ſuch a conduct, that I ſhall have a worſe opinion of this aſſembly than I have at preſent, if they do not openly expreſs their indignation at ſuch indecency of behaviour. In the hiſtory of the church we find no character more odious, or more unclerical, if I may ſpeak ſo, than

ambition and open ſolicitation of eccleſiaſtical preferment. Little changes in forms, Sir, do often produce at laſt great changes in manners and characters. In former times, in our church, the probationer or miniſter himſelf was never conſidered as a party, but was conſidered as the ſubject concerning which that proceſs was carried on by the callers or referrees; but now they have been for ſome time paſt conſidered as parties—they begin to allow the cauſe to appear at the bar—to urge their claim—to conſider the people who are to be their charge as their adverſaries, and to treat them with contempt and diſdain.

I confeſs, Sir, I am not able to imagine what are the views of a miniſter who acts in this manner. It is not, I fear, eaſy to anſwer, that he reſolves to change his ſituation and take upon him that office, from ſincere regard to the glory of God and love to ſouls, which he muſt profeſs at his admiſſion. But as we muſt be tender and cautious in judging of the inward motives of others, I ſhall leave that to Him who judgeth the ſecrets of all hearts; but in the mean time, every one in this houſe is now called to judge, whether it would be for the glory of God and the good of mankind, to ſuffer him to execute his intention. Let it be conſidered with ſerioufneſs. Moderator, it is not only the people of the pariſh, or thoſe of lower rank, but many of all ſtations whom we ſhall offend, in the proper ſenſe of the word, if we order this ſettlement. They are led by ſuch things to treat, and they often do treat with deriſion, a miniſter's

concern for his usefulness, and affirm that it is no more than a desire of a comfortable benefice and salary for life. I shall be sorry to see the day, when by resembling them in their practice, we shall learn from England to leave the people and the work altogether out of the act, and so call our charges no more *parishes* but *livings*.

# LETTER

SENT TO

# *SCOTLAND,*

FOR THE

## SCOTS MAGAZINE.

I AM informed by my correſpondents in Scotland, that ſeveral letters have been publiſhed in the newſpapers there, containing the moſt virulent reflections upon me, on account of an advertiſement by J—— P——, merchant in Glaſgow, relating to the ſettlement of a tract of land in Nova Scotia, in which he mentions my being concerned. One or two of theſe papers have been ſent me, and contain ſo many miſtakes in point of fact, as well as betray ſuch ignorance of the ſubject they attempt to treat, that it would be a diſgrace for any man to enter into a formal quarrel with ſuch opponents. Were I in Scotland at this time, I ſhould think it a

very great departure from prudence, to take the leaſt public notice of theſe invectives. Few perſons have been leſs concerned than I have been, through life, to contradict falſe accuſations, from an opinion which I formed early, and which has been confirmed by experience, that there is ſcarcely any thing more harmleſs than political or party malice. It is beſt to leave it to itſelf; oppoſition and contradiction are the only means of giving it life and duration.

But as I am now at ſo great a diſtance, and the ſubject of the ſcandal is what paſſes in America, ſo that impartial perſons in general may be leſs able to judge of the probability of facts, and cannot have proper opportunities of making a complete inquiry, I think it neceſſary to ſtate this matter with all the perſpicuity and brevity of which I am capable. The accuſation, I think, may be reduced to the following argument—Migrations from Britain to America, are not only hurtful, but tend to the ruin of that kingdom; therefore J. W. by inviting people to leave Scotland and ſettle in America, is an enemy to his country.

It will not be improper to mention in the entry, that my having any concern in ſuch an extenſive undertaking, was wholly accidental and unexpected. I was invited and preſſed to it, from a motive that was not at all concealed, that it would give the people who intended to come out, greater confidence that they ſhould meet with fair treatment. This very reaſon induced me to conſent; and that I might the more effectually anſwer that purpoſe, one of the expreſs conditions of my joining with the company

was, that no land ſhould be ſold dearer to any coming from Scotland than I ſhould direct. This was the more neceſſary, that either through miſtake, and the power of European ideas, or through miſguided avarice, ſome advertiſements had been publiſhed in the Scots newſpapers, which would not appear ſurpriſing to perſons born and educated in Scotland, but which are infinitely ridiculous to one acquainted with American affairs. In particular, one I cut out of a Glaſgow newſpaper and ſent home, relating to Newfoundland, where perſons were invited to go to make their fortunes, by renting each family thirty acres of land, at the eaſy rent of ſixpence Sterling at firſt, and gradually riſing till it came to two ſhillings yearly for ever. Now how abſurd is this, when in many places you can buy the fee ſimple of land for the ſame or leſs money than is here aſked for rent! Beſides, how ſhall thirty acres of land maintain any family, in a place where land is ſo cheap, and labour ſo dear?

I have heard it given as a reaſon for theſe enſnaring propoſals, that people in Britain will not believe that land is good for any thing, if you offer it for a few ſhillings per acre in fee ſimple. But the people in Britain ſhould be told, that the value of land does not depend upon its quality, unleſs in a very ſmall degree---it depends upon its ſituation, diſtance from other ſettlements, and many circumſtances that need not be mentioned. It is a matter now as fully aſcertained as univerſal uncontradicted teſtimony can make it, that the back land in America is in general better than that along the ſhore, though very different in value; becauſe the one is full of

trees and wild beaſts, and the other is full of houſes, fields, and orchards. One would think that this matter might be well enough underſtood by this time. When a new ſettlement is making, eſpecially if one family or one company have a very large tract, they will ſell it very cheap; and if they are urgent to forward the ſettlement, they will give it to one or two families at firſt for nothing at all; and their profit does not ariſe from the price paid by the firſt purchaſers, but from the proſpect of ſpeedily raiſing the value of what remains. Any man that can think, may underſtand this from J—— P——'s advertiſement. He propoſes to ſell to the firſt families at ſixpence Sterling an acre. What profit could he make of that ſmall price? Suppoſing he ſhould ſell 20,000 acres, the whole produce would be but five hundred pounds, to be divided among twelve or fourteen perſons. The plain fact is, that the ſum is not at all equivalent to the trouble and expence of ſerving out the patent; therefore the profit muſt be future, and muſt ariſe wholly from the proſperity of the ſettlement. I believe it is a rule, without any exception, that a man's duty is his intereſt; but there is no caſe whatever, in which the intereſt of both parties is more manifeſtly the ſame, than in ſelling and purchaſing new lands to ſettle upon; for the proprietors can receive no benefit, but from the ſucceſs and thriving of the ſettlers.

New land may be bought in America at all prices, from ſixpence Sterling an acre, to forty ſhillings; and thoſe who would judge of the quality by the price, would do juſt like one who ſhould judge that

an acre ſold for a houſe in the city, muſt be twenty times better in ſoil than the fields at two miles diſtance, becauſe it is twenty times the price. The price of land in America is riſing very faſt, and ſometimes riſes in particular places far more rapidly than could be foreſeen. A gentleman who has a large tract in New York government, within theſe three years offered to give away for nothing ſeveral thouſand acres, at the rate of two hundred acres to each family of actual ſettlers, and yet has given away none; but ſince that time has ſold a great deal at four ſhillings and ſixpence Sterling, and now will ſcarce ſell any at that price.

Having premiſed the above, I would intreat the reader's attention to the following remarks:

1. There is very little ground for being alarmed at the migrations from Britain to America. The numbers who come abroad never have been, and probably never will be, of any conſequence to the population of the country. Any one who will read Monteſquieu will ſoon be ſatisfied, that when the ſpirit and principles of a conſtitution are good, occaſional migrations, and even war, famine and peſtilence, are hardly felt after a little time. The place of thoſe who are removed is ſpeedily filled. Two or three hundred families going abroad, makes a great noiſe; but it is nothing at all to the people in Great Britain, and will but make way for the ſettlement and proviſion of thoſe who ſtay behind, and occaſion them to marry and multiply the faſter. It is probable that the people in Britain imagine, that the new ſettlements in America are wholly filled

by thoſe who come from Europe. It is far otherwiſe; they do not make the fortieth part in any new ſettlement. Such tracts are peopled from the adjacent ſettlements at firſt, with a few ſtranger emigrants, but their chief increaſe is from natural generation. If a ſettlement is good, a few families will ſpeedily make a colony; but if otherwiſe, you may ſend in ſhips full of people every year, and yet it will come to nothing. If a few paſſengers coming out from Britain threaten deſtruction to that populous country, what inſtant ruin muſt come upon the ſettled parts of New-England, New-York, New-Jerſey, and Pennſylvania, from whence many times the number remove every year to the back countries, and yet it has not any ſenſible effect, either on the price of land or the number of the people, which continue to increaſe notwithſtanding. America is certainly exhibiting at this time, a ſcene that is new in the hiſtory of mankind. It increaſes in a proportion that no political calculations have yet been able to underſtand, or lay down rules for. The reaſon of this I take to be, that when colonies were ſent out in ancient times, the people and the ſoil were ſomewhat ſimilar, and improved by ſlow degrees; but in America we ſee a wild, but a noble ſoil, taken poſſeſſion of by all the power, wealth, and learning of Europe, which puſhes on its improvement with a rapidity which is inconceivable.

Another thing ought not to be omitted: There are great numbers of people that go from America to Britain, ſo that the migration is not all one way. The people in New-England (an old ſettlement) ſay, that they have ſent twice as many people to

England, as ever came out of it to them. But though upon the whole, while this country is but yet ſettling, the number coming out ſhould be greater, yet there is this difference, that they commonly come out poor, and return rich. This is very much to the advantage of Britain, if wealth and an increaſed value of land be an advantage. The truth is, even as to numbers, though I do not think ſo many people go from America to Europe, as come from Europe to America, yet I am apt to think, that there is little difference in the number that goes to, or comes from the iſland of Great Britain.

2. But ſuppoſing (what I do not believe) that inviting people over from Scotland to America, did tend in ſome degree to depopulate that part of the world, I cannot ſee why a man who does ſo ſhould, for that reaſon, be called an enemy to his country. What is it for a man to be a friend to his country? Is it to wiſh well to the ſtones and the earth, or the people that inhabit it? Can he be an enemy to them, by pointing out to ſuch of them as are poor or oppreſſed, where they may have a happy and plentiful proviſion, and their poſterity be multiplied as the ſand of the ſea? If he is their enemy by deceiving them, the diſcovery will ſoon be made, and the deſign will be deteſted; or rather, indeed, the diſcovery would have been made long ago, as the intercourſe between Great Britain and America has been of ſo many years ſtanding. Is he, then, the enemy of thoſe who ſtay behind? Not ſurely of the multitude or common people, for there will be but more room made for them, and the more eaſy acceſs

to a comfortable ſubſiſtence. It remains, then, that he muſt be the enemy of the landholders, who may run ſome riſk of being obliged to lower their rents. But is this a liberal way of thinking, to ſay a man is an enemy to his country, while he promotes the happineſs of the great body of the people, with a ſmall diminution of the intereſt of an handful? Allowing, therefore, this argument all the force that it can pretend to, the accuſation is baſe and ſcandalous, ariſing from a littleneſs of mind, incapable of cheriſhing a generous love of mankind. I cannot help thinking it is doing a real ſervice to my country, when I ſhew that thoſe of them who find it difficult to ſubſiſt on the ſoil in which they were born, may eaſily tranſport themſelves to a ſoil and climate vaſtly ſuperior to that. Sobriety and induſtry cannot fail to be attended by independence and abundance; neither is this a matter that can be doubted by thoſe who reflect a little on the nature of things. A country where land is cheap, proviſions in plenty, and, as a natural conſequence, labour is dear, muſt be favourable to the induſtrious huſbandman. His chief concern ought to be, to guard againſt the temptations always attendant on ſuch a ſtate, viz. lazineſs and intemperance. I will take this opportunity alſo to obſerve, that ſuch as have a ſmall independent fortune in Britain, if they have a taſte for agriculture, might eaſily, in America, live upon their eſtates as well as thoſe in Britain who have a yearly revenue equal to their whole ſtock. But this is only in caſe a man lives upon his land, and eats the fruit of it. If he expects that he may live idly and magnificently in a city,

and rent out his land at a high price, he will find himſelf miſerably miſtaken. It would be a ſtrange country, indeed, if land might be bought cheap and rented dear. This is impoſſible; for by what arguments could you perſuade a man to pay a high rent for land, when, by going a little back, he may have the property to himſelf for a ſmall matter.

But, after all, I can never admit that the happineſs of one claſs of men depends upon the miſery of another; or that it can be any way contrary to the intereſt of the landholders in Scotland, that a few who find themſelves pinched in their circumſtances, or who have an active and enterpriſing diſpoſition, ſhould remove to America. There are always ſtrong motives to hinder a man's removal from his own country, and it cannot be ſuppoſed that any conſiderable number will think of ſuch a meaſure, unleſs they are really in an oppreſſed ſtate. If this is the caſe, from the natural courſe of things, their removal will be no injury to any body, but like a ſwarm of bees coming off from a hive that is too full. If it is the caſe in particular places, from the iron hand of tyranny, I ſee no reaſon to offer any excuſe for the meritorious act of aſſiſting them to make their eſcape. Let not people confine themſelves to narrow, ſelfiſh views. No part of Europe has received, or does now receive a greater acceſſion of wealth from the American ſettlements, than Great Britain; and perhaps there is no part of Great Britain where the rent of land has riſen higher by the ſame means, than Scotland. I ſuppoſe every gentleman in that part of the kingdom

is well pleaſed to hear that ſeveral thouſand Palatines, or people from the north of Ireland, go to America every year; or that from time to time, ſome one or other who went abroad with a lancet in his pocket, is coming back with an opulent eſtate to ſettle in his neighbourhood; or that no wealthy American is ſatisfied till he has ſent his ſon home, as they call it, to ſpend from two or three hundreds, to as many thouſands, in order to complete his education by ſtudy, or end his life by gambling. If ſo, why ſhould he grudge that ſome of his poorer countrymen ſhould acquire a comfortable ſettlement there, though with little proſpect of returning, eſpecially as it is impoſſible for them to do any thing for the improvement of America, that will not in the end redound to the advantage of Great Britain?

3. I have only further to ſay, that the outcry made upon this ſubject is as impolitic as it is unjuſt. If I wanted to people America from Scotland, I would not think of employing a more effectual way, than exciting or hiring one or two authors, who have nothing elſe to do, to write againſt it. This would neceſſarily make people pay attention to the ſubject, and ſeek after the information which they would otherwiſe have neglected. At the ſame time, as human nature in general is not very fond of reſtraint, they would perhaps be the more diſpoſed to remove, when they found their landlords anxious that they ſhould ſtay. I deſire it may be particularly obſerved, that I have not ſaid in any part of the above diſcourſe, nor do I believe that there is any hard-heartedneſs or diſpoſition to oppreſs in the

landlords of Scotland, more than in any other country, nor more at this time than any former period. The rife of lands has been the conſequence of an increaſe of trade and wealth, and the diſpoſition to go abroad in the common people, at preſent, is owing to the ſame cauſe that made clerks and ſupercargoes go out for theſe fifty years paſt, viz. the hope of bettering their circumſtances. It is both unjuſt and impoſſible to hinder them, if they be ſo minded; and, for the reaſons given above, I am perſuaded it will not be the leaſt injury to thoſe of any rank whom they leave behind. For my own part, my intereſt in the matter is not great; but ſince Providence has ſent me to this part of the world, and ſince ſo much honour has been done me, as to ſuppoſe that my character might be ſome ſecurity againſt fraud and impoſition, I ſhall certainly look upon it as my duty, to do every real ſervice in my power to ſuch of my countrymen as ſhall fall in my way, and ſhall either deſire or ſeem to need my aſſiſtance.

J. W.

# IGNORANCE OF THE BRITISH

WITH RESPECT TO

# AMERICA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SCOTS MAGAZINE.

SIR, *Philadelphia, May* 28. 1771.

I SAW in your Magazine (Appendix 1770) a letter, ſigned E. R. containing ſome remarks upon, and a ſevere condemnation of Dr Lathrop's ſermon at Boſton, entitled, "Innocent Blood crying for Vengeance." Theſe remarks are introduced with obſerving, that the ſynod of New-York and Philadelphia had written a letter, and claimed relation to the church of Scotland; and then ſays the author, 'on reading of which I could not help thinking, if we may judge of the American church from the ſample here given, that our church derives no great honour from her weſtern progeny; but I hope the ſtock is better than the ſample.'

Now, Sir, as to this author's obſervations on Dr Lathrop's ſermon, I ſhall ſay little—becauſe, perhaps, it cannot be wholly juſtified; yet, if all circumſtances are duly attended to, there is as little reaſon to inſult or glory over the people of Boſton, as there was to excite the public reſentment againſt Captain P——. But what I have only in view, is ſhortly to expoſe the exceſſive abſurdity and ignorance of bringing in the ſynod of New-York and Philadelphia on this occaſion. Were the author of this ſermon even a member of the ſynod, or any way connected with it, the attempt would be impertinent; becauſe no church can be ſuppoſed anſwerable for the prudence of every particular perſon connected with her, eſpecially the wiſdom or propriety of their publications. Does the church of Scotland deſire to be judged by this rule? I ſuppoſe not. Nor will I be guilty of ſo much injuſtice, as to judge of her by this her friend and advocate. 'I hope,' as he ſays, 'the ſtock is better than the ſample;' for,

How aſtoniſhing muſt be the ignorance of that gentleman concerning the Britiſh dominions in America, when he ſuppoſes the miniſters of Boſton to be a part of the ſynod of New-York and Philadelphia! Did the ſynod's letter ſay any ſuch thing? Did it not enumerate the provinces in which their members reſide? Did it not inform the Public, that it is but ſeventy years ſince the firſt preſbytery met in this country? But give me leave to inform your correſpondent, that it is about one hundred and forty years ſince the people of New-England eſtabliſhed a college at Cambridge near Boſton; that their

churches are upon the independent plan, and are, in the four New-England provinces, above five hundred in number; whereas the whole synod of New-York and Philadelphia contained, when their letter was written, but one hundred and twenty-seven members, and does not now amount to one hundred and fifty.

I do not mean by this to disclaim connection with the churches of New-England. They are a most respectable part of the church of Christ. Nor do I think that any part of the British empire is at this day equal to them for real religion and sound morals. My single purpose is to teach your correspondent, and your readers in general, not to write upon American affairs unless they understand them. I tell you nothing but truth when I say, that being a Briton, I have often blushed in company to hear stories narrated of the absurd and ignorant manner in which persons of no inconsiderable stations in Britain have talked of things and places in America. We have heard of a gentleman in the House of Commons frequently making mention of the *island* of Pennsylvania; and of another who, in the Privy Council, insisted, after contradiction, on his being right in his description of the *island* of New-Jersey.

But what excels every thing is the following story, which I have been assured by persons well acquainted with it, was a fact.—Some years ago a frigate came from England, with dispatches for many, or most of the governors of provinces in North America. The captain had orders to go first to New York, and from thence to proceed to

Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, Pennſylvania, and the Jerſeys. When he arrived at New York, he delivered his diſpatches there, and mentioned his orders. The governor told him, if you will give me the letters for the governors of New Jerſey and Pennſylvania, I will undertake to have them delivered in forty-eight hours, but if you take the rout preſcribed to you, perhaps they will not receive them in three months. To which the captain replied, I do not care a farthing about the matter; I will ſtick to my inſtructions.

I am, Sir, your moſt obedient,

humble ſervant,

X. Y.

# ADDRESS

TO THE

# INHABITANTS OF JAMAICA,

## *and other West-India Islands,*

IN BEHALF OF THE

## COLLEGE OF NEW-JERSEY.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is unneceſſary to begin this addreſs by a laboured encomium on learning in general, or the importance of public ſeminaries for the inſtruction of youth. Their uſe in every country, their neceſſity in a new or riſing country, and particularly the influence of ſcience in giving a proper direction and full force to induſtry or enterprize, are indeed ſo manifeſt, that they are either admitted by all, or the exceptions are ſo few as to be wholly unworthy of regard.

In a more private view, the importance of education is little leſs evident. It promotes virtue and

happineſs, as well as arts and induſtry. On this, as on the former, it is unneceſſary to enlarge; only ſuffer me to make a remark, not quite ſo common, that, if there is any juſt compariſon on this ſubject, the children of perſons in the higher ranks of life, and eſpecially of thoſe who by their own activity and diligence riſe to opulence, have, of all others, the greateſt need of an early, prudent, and well conducted education. The wealth to which they are born, becomes often a dangerous temptation, and the ſtation in which they enter upon life requires ſuch duties, as thoſe of the fineſt talents can ſcarcely be ſuppoſed capable of, unleſs they have been improved and cultivated with the utmoſt care. Experience ſhews the uſe of a liberal education in both theſe views. It is generally a preſervative from vices of a certain claſs, by giving eaſy acceſs to more refined pleaſures, and inſpiring the mind with an abhorrence of low riot, and contempt for brutal converſation. It is alſo of acknowledged neceſſity to thoſe who do not wiſh to live for themſelves alone, but would apply their talents to the ſervice of the Public and the good of mankind. Education is therefore of equal importance, in order either to enjoy life with dignity and elegance, or employ it to the benefit of ſociety in offices of power or truſt.

But leaving theſe general topics, or rather, taking it for granted that every thing of this kind is by intelligent perſons, eſpecially parents, both believed and felt, I proceed to inform the public, that it is intended to ſolicit benefactions from the wealthy

and generous, in behalf of a College of conſiderable ſtanding, founded at Naſſau-Hall, in Princeton, New-erſey. In order to this it is neceſſary for me, 1. To ſhew the great advantage it will be to the inhabitants of the Weſt Indies, to have it in their power to ſend their children to approved places of education on the continent of America, inſtead of being obliged to ſend them over, for the very elements of ſcience, to South or North Britain. 2. To point out the ſituation and advantages of the College of New-Jerſey in particular. And as I was never a lover either of florid diſcourſes or oſtentatious promiſes, I ſhall endeavour to handle theſe two points with all poſſible ſimplicity, and with that reſerve and decency which are ſo neceſſary, where compariſon in ſome reſpects cannot be avoided.

On the firſt of theſe points let it be obſerved,

That places of education on the continent of America are much nearer to the Weſt Indies than thoſe in Great Britain, and yet ſufficiently diſtant to remove the temptation of running home and lurking in idleneſs. This is a circumſtance which, other things being ſuppoſed equal, is by no means inconſiderable. Parents may hear much oftener from and of their children, and may even viſit them, as is known to have been the caſe here, with no great loſs of time for buſineſs, and to the advantage of their own health. They may alſo much more ſpeedily and certainly be informed, whether they are profiting and have juſtice done them or not, and remove or continue them at pleaſure. The diſtance indeed is, if I miſtake not, well proportioned in all reſpects. It is ſuch as to allow of the advantages

juſt now mentioned, and yet ſo great as to favour the behaviour and inſtruction of the youth. I have obſerved, in the courſe of four years experience, that thoſe who came from the greateſt diſtance have, in general, behaved with moſt regularity. Being removed from their relations, it becomes neceſſary for them to ſupport a character, as they find themſelves treated by their companions, teachers, and indeed all other perſons, according to their behaviour. This is ſo true, that if parents are obliged to place their children out of their own families, an hundred miles diſtance is better than twenty, and ſo of every other proportion, till we come to the hurtful extreme.

Let it be further obſerved, that the climate of the continent of North America is certainly much more healthy in itſelf, and probably alſo more ſuited to the conſtitutions of thoſe who have been born in the Weſt Indies, than that of Great Britain. Health is the foundation of every earthly bleſſing, and abſolutely neceſſary, both to the receiving inſtruction in youth, and being able in riper years to apply it to its proper uſe. Perental tenderneſs will make every one feel the importance of this to his own children. And whether the obſervation itſelf is juſt or not, I leave to be decided by the judgment of all who have been in both countries, and the information they will readily give to thoſe who have not.

Having touched on theſe circumſtances, let us try to make the compariſon as to the ſubſtance of the education itſelf. Here, I am ſenſible, it behoves me to write with the utmoſt circumſpection, to avoid giving offence, and that to ſome this will appear,

at firſt ſight, altogether impoſſible. I am, however, not without the greateſt hopes, that I ſhall be able fully to prove the propoſition I have laid down, without giving any juſt ground of offence to perſons of reflection and candour. No man can have a higher opinion of, and not many have a more thorough acquaintance with the means of education at preſent in Great Britain, than the author of this addreſs, who was born in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, educated in it, and ſpent the greateſt part of his after-life in conſtant intercourſe and great intimacy with the members of the univerſity of Glaſgow. He therefore ſays it, both with pleaſure and gratitude, that any young gentleman who is ſtrictly ſober in his behaviour, and who applies with ſteadineſs and diligence, has all poſſible advantages, particularly in North Britain, with which he is beſt acquainted, for improving himſelf in claſſic literature, in every branch of ſcience, and eſpecially in the juſtly valued knowledge of the force and propriety of the Engliſh language, and in true taſte; including all that is uſually comprehended under the general expreſſion of the Belles Lettres. Nay, further, he admits and affirms, that any gentleman of fortune, who would give the laſt and higheſt poliſh to the education of a young man of promiſing parts, would do well to ſend him, after his principles are fixed, and his judgment a little matured, for a year or two, to ſome of the univerſities of Great Britain. But notwithſtanding theſe conceſſions, if they may be ſo called, it is hoped it will appear, that it would be much more to the advantage of the gentlemen of the Weſt Indies, to give

their children their grammar-ſchool and college education, at leaſt to their firſt degree in the arts, in an American ſeminary, if conducted by perſons of ability and integrity, than to ſend them to Great Britain; and that for two important reaſons: firſt, the better to ſecure their inſtruction; and, ſecondly, for the preſervation of their morals.

1. For the greater ſecurity of their inſtruction. The colleges in Britain have by no means that forcible motive that we have, not only to teach thoſe who are willing to learn, but to ſee that every one be obliged to ſtudy, and actually learn, in proportion to his capacity. Theſe old foundations have ſtood ſo many ages, have had their character ſo long eſtabliſhed, and are indeed ſo well known to be filled with men of the greateſt ability, that they do not ſo much as feel any injury, in point of reputation, from one or more coming out of college almoſt as ignorant as they went in. The truth is, I do not think they ought to loſe any character by it. Every one knows, that it is owing to the idleneſs or profligacy of the boy, and not the inſufficiency of the maſter. When the numbers of one claſs are from an hundred to an hundred and thirty, or perhaps more, and when they do not live in college, how is it poſſible the maſter can keep them to their private ſtudies, or even with any certainty diſcern whether they ſtudy diligently or not. A good profeſſor is eaſily and ſpeedily diſtinguiſhed by his own performances, by the eſteem, attachment, and progreſs of the diligent, but very little, if at all, hurt by the ignorance of the negligent. I write theſe

things to vaſt numbers who know them as well as I do; and I could eaſily produce gentlemen in America, who have freely and generouſly confeſſed themſelves to be unhappy proofs of their truth. Let not any body ſay I reflect upon the teachers for not uſing diſcipline to oblige them to apply. The numbers are ſo great, that to try and judge every neglect would take more time than they have for their whole work. To this may be added, that it may very often happen that the perſons to whoſe charge boys in early life are ſent from the Weſt Indies, either are not themſelves judges, or, from their ſituation and buſineſs, have few opportunities of knowing whether they profit or not.

On the other hand, the young ſeminaries in America have their character conſtantly at ſtake for their diligence, as one or two untaught coming out from us, affects us in the moſt ſenſible manner. As to the college of New-Jerſey in particular, we have ſeen the importance of this in ſo ſtrong a light, that whereas before we had half-yearly, we now have quarterly examinations, carried on with the utmoſt ſtrictneſs, when all who are found deficient are degraded to the inferior claſs. So impartially have theſe trials been conducted, that nothing is more uſual than for thoſe who ſuſpect themſelves, eſpecially if their relations are near, to pretend ſickneſs and avoid the examination, that they may afterwards fall back without the diſhonour of a ſentence. Further, all the ſcholars with us, as ſoon as they put on the gown, are obliged to lodge in college, and muſt of neceſſity be in their chamber in ſtudy hours; nor is it in the leaſt difficult to diſcover, whether

they apply carefully or not. The teachers alſo live in college, ſo that they have every poſſible advantage, not only for aſſiſting the diligent, but ſtimulating the ſlothful.

2. The ſecond reaſon for preferring an American education is, that their morals may be more effectually preſerved. This, by all virtuous and judicious parents, will be held a point of the laſt conſequence. The danger they run of contracting vicious habits by being ſent to Britain, has been often complained of, and therefore, I ſuppoſe, is matter of experience. If ſo, it will not be difficult to aſſign the cauſes of it, which may be ſafely mentioned, becauſe they carry no imputation upon the ſchools or colleges to which they are ſent. They generally are, and are always ſuppoſed to be of great wealth. The very name of a Weſt Indian has come to imply in it great opulence. Now it is well known that, in all the great towns in Britain, a ſet of profligate boys, and ſometimes artful perſons farther advanced in life, attach themſelves to ſuch as are well ſupplied with money, impoſe upon their youth and ſimplicity, gratify them in every irregular deſire, and lead them both into idleneſs and vice. There are alſo, in every conſiderable place in Great Britain, but eſpecially the principal cities where the colleges are fixed, a conſtant ſucceſſion and variety of intoxicating diverſions, ſuch as balls, concerts, plays, races, and others. Theſe, whatever may be pleaded for ſome of them, in a certain meaſure, for thoſe further advanced, every body muſt acknowledge are highly pernicious to youth in the firſt ſtages of their education. The temptation becomes

ſo much the ſtronger, and indeed almoſt irreſiſtible, when an acquaintance with theſe things is conſidered as faſhionable life, and neceſſary to the accompliſhment of a man of breeding. Is it to be ſuppoſed that young perſons of great fortune, when they can be immediate partakers, will wait with patience for the proper time when they may be permitted to view with caution ſuch ſcenes of diſſipation? On the contrary, it may be expected that they will give into them with all the impetuoſity and raſhneſs of youth; and, when their parents expect them to return well ſtored with claſſic learning and philoſophy, they may find them only well acquainted with the laws of the turf or gaming-table, and expert in the uſe of the reigning phraſes of thoſe honourable arts.

What proviſion is made for preſerving and improving the morals of the ſcholars with us, I leave till I come to ſpeak of the conſtitution and ſituation of the college of New-Jerſey. But before I diſmiſs this part of the ſubject, I muſt juſt repeat, that the two reaſons I have given againſt a Britiſh education do, and were intended only to conclude againſt ſending boys in early life. At that time they are incapable of reaping the advantages chiefly to be valued in a Britiſh education. Theſe are, not only hearing and being able to judge of the public performances of men of letters, in the pulpit, at the bar, and in parliament, but being introduced to the acquaintance, and enjoying the converſation of men of eminence. This is a favour that would not be granted to boys, and, if granted, could be of no ſervice, but contributes, in the higheſt degree, to the delight

and inſtruction of thoſe of riper years. Experience ſeems greatly to confirm this, for, as many boys have left ſome of the beſt ſchools in Britain with little claſſic knowledge, though ſupported at great expence, ſo thoſe who received their firſt education in this country, and went home to finiſh it, have ſeldom returned without great and real improvement.

In addition to theſe arguments in behalf of American colleges, drawn from the inſtruction and morals of the youth who are ſent to them, I cannot help mentioning one other which muſt have great weight in a view ſomewhat different. Theſe colleges muſt neceſſarily, in time, produce a number of young men proper to undertake the office of private tutors in gentlemens' families. There are ſome who prefer a private to a public education at any rate, eſpecially in the very firſt ſtages, and ſome find it neceſſary, as not being able to ſupport the expence of ſending their children ſo early, and keeping them ſo long from home. Now all who know the ſituation of things in Britain, muſt be ſenſible how difficult it is to get young men of capacity or expectation to leave their native country in order to undertake the inſtruction of gentlemens children. In this office there is little proſpect of increaſe of fortune, to balance the riſk of going to a new and dangerous, or ſuppoſed dangerous climate. But thoſe who are born and educated in America will not only increaſe the number of ſuch teachers, but they will have no ſuch hideous apprehenſions of going to any part of the continent or iſlands. Whatever is done, therefore, to raiſe and ſupport proper

ſeminaries in America, will, in time, be followed by this great and general benefit, which I have been aſſured is very much needed in many or moſt of the Weſt India iſlands.

I will now proceed to ſpeak a little of the conſtitution and advantages of the college of New-Jerſey in particular.

About twenty-four years ago, ſeveral gentlemen and miniſters in this province, by the friendſhip and patronage of Jonathan Belcher, Eſq. then Governor, obtained a very ample royal charter, incorporating them under the title of Truſtees of the College of New-Jerſey; and giving them the ſame privileges and powers that are given to the 'two Engliſh Univerſities, or any other Univerſity or College in Great Britain.' They, although only poſſeſſed of a naked charter, without any public encouragement, immediately began the inſtitution, and very ſoon after, by their own activity and zeal, and the benevolence of others who had the higheſt opinion of their integrity, raiſed a noble building, called Naſſau-Hall, at Princeton, New-Jerſey. This they choſe to do, though it waſted their capital, as their great intention was to make effectual proviſion, not only for the careful inſtruction, but for the regular government of the youth. There all the ſcholars are lodged, and alſo boarded, except when they have expreſs licenſe to board out, in the preſident's houſe or elſewhere.

The regular courſe of inſtruction is in four claſſes, exactly after the manner, and bearing the names of the claſſes in the Engliſh univerſities: Freſhman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior. In the firſt year

they read Latin and Greek, with the Roman and Grecian antiquities, and rhetoric. In the ſecond, continuing the ſtudy of the languages, they learn a complete ſyſtem of geography, with the uſe of the globes, the firſt principles of philoſophy, and the elements of mathematical knowledge. The third, though the languages are not wholly omitted, is chiefly employed in mathematics and natural philoſophy. And the ſenior year is employed in reading the higher claſſics, proceeding in the mathematics and natural philoſophy, and going through a courſe of moral philoſophy. In addition to theſe, the Preſident gives lectures to the juniors and ſeniors, which conſequently every ſtudent hears twice over in his courſe, firſt upon chronology and hiſtory, and afterwards upon compoſition and criticiſm. He has alſo taught the French language laſt winter, and it will continue to be taught to thoſe who deſire to learn it.

During the whole courſe of their ſtudies, the three younger claſſes, two every evening formerly, and now three, becauſe of their increaſed number, pronounce an oration on a ſtage erected for that purpoſe in the hall, immediately after prayers, that they may learn, by early habit, preſence of mind, and proper pronunciation and geſture in public ſpeaking. This excellent practice, which has been kept up almoſt from the firſt foundation of the college, has had the moſt admirable effects. The ſenior ſcholars, every five or ſix weeks, pronounce orations of their own compoſition, to which all perſons of any note in the neighbourhood are invited or admitted.

The college is now furniſhed with all the moſt important helps to inſtruction. The library contains a very large collection of valuable books. The leſſons of aſtronomy are given upon the orrery lately invented and conſtructed by David Rittenhouſe, Eſq. which is reckoned, by the beſt judges, the moſt excellent in its kind of any ever yet produced; and when what is commiſſioned, and now upon its way, is added to what the college already poſſeſſes, the apparatus for mathematics and natural philoſphy will be equal, if not ſuperior, to any on the continent.

As we have never yet been obliged to omit or alter it for want of ſcholars, there is a fixed annual commencement on the laſt Wedneſday of September, when, after a variety of public exerciſes, always attended by a vaſt concourſe of the politeſt company from the different parts of this province, and the cities of New York and Philadelphia, the ſtudents whoſe ſenior year is expiring, are admitted to the degree of Bachelors of Arts; the Batchelors of three years ſtanding, to the degrees of Maſters; and ſuch other higher degrees granted, as are either regularly claimed, or the Truſtees think fit to beſtow upon thoſe who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their literary productions, or their appearances in public life.

On the day preceding the commencement laſt year, there was, and it will be continued every year hereafter, a public exhibition, and voluntary contention for prizes, open for every member of college. Theſe were firſt, ſecond, and third prizes, on each of the following ſubjects:—1. Reading the

Engliſh language with propriety and grace, and being able to anſwer all queſtions on its orthography and grammar. 2. Reading the Latin and Greek languages in the ſame manner, with particular attention to true quantity. 3. Speaking Latin. 4. Latin verſions. 5. Pronouncing Engliſh orations. The preference was determined by ballot, and all preſent permitted to vote, who were graduates of this or any other college.

As to the government of the college, no correction by ſtripes is permitted. Such as cannot be governed by reaſon, and the principles of honour and ſhame, are reckoned unfit for reſidence in a college. The collegiate cenſures are: 1. Private admonition by the preſident, profeſſor, or tutor. 2. Before the faculty. 3. Before the whole claſs to which the offender belongs. 4. And the laſt and higheſt, before all the members of college aſſembled in the hall. And, to preſerve the weight and dignity of theſe cenſures, it has been an eſtabliſhed practice, that the laſt or higheſt cenſure, viz. public admonition, ſhall never be repeated upon the ſame perſon. If it has been thought neceſſary to inflict it upon any one, and if this does not preſerve him from falling into ſuch groſs irregularities a ſecond time, it is underſtood that expulſion is immediately to follow.

Through the narrowneſs of the funds, the government and inſtruction has hitherto been carried on by a preſident and three tutors. At laſt commencement, the truſtees choſe a profeſſor of mathematics; and intend, as their funds are raiſed, to

have a greater number of profeſſorſhips, and carry their plan to as great perfection as poſſible.

The above relates wholly to what is properly the college; but there is alſo at the ſame place, eſtabliſhed under the particular direction and patronage of the preſident, a grammar-ſchool, where boys are inſtructed in the Latin and Greek languages with the utmoſt care, and on the plan of the moſt approved teachers in Great Britain. It is now ſo large as to have two maſters for the languages, and one for writing and arithmetic; and as ſome are ſent with a deſign only to learn the Latin, Greek, and French languages, arithmetic, geography, and the practical branches of the mathematics, without going through a full college courſe, ſuch ſcholars are permitted to attend the inſtruction of the claſſes in whatever coincides with their plan. It is alſo now reſolved, at the requeſt of ſeveral gentlemen, to have an Engliſh maſter after next vacation, for teaching the Engliſh language regularly and grammatically, and for perfecting by Engliſh exerciſes thoſe whoſe previous inſtruction may have been defective or erroneous.

I have thus laid before the Public a conciſe account of the conſtitution of the college of New-Jerſey, and muſt now earneſtly recommend it to the aſſiſtance and patronage of men of liberal and ingenuous minds. I am ſenſible that nothing is more difficult, than to write in behalf of what the writer himſelf has ſo great a part in conducting, ſo as neither to fail in doing juſtice to the ſubject, nor exceed in improper or arrogant profeſſions. And yet to employ others to write for us, who may have

ſome pretence, as indifferent perſons, to embelliſh our characters, is liable to ſtill greater ſuſpicion. The very beſt ſecurity one can give to the Public for decency and truth, is to write openly in his own perſon, that he may be under a neceſſity to anſwer for it, if it is liable to challenge.

This is the method I have determined to follow; and that I may neither offend the delicacy of my friends, nor provoke the reſentment of my enemies, I will endeavour humbly to recommend this college to the attention and eſteem of men of penetration and candour, chiefly from ſuch circumſtances as have little or no relation to the perſonal characters of thoſe now employed, but are eſſential to its ſituation and conſtitution, and therefore muſt be ſuppoſed to have not only the moſt powerful, but the moſt laſting effect. The circumſtances to which I would intreat the attention of impartial perſons, are the following.

1. The college of New-Jerſey is altogether independent. It hath received no favour from government but the charter, by the particular friendſhip of a perſon now deceaſed. It owes nothing but to the benefactions of a Public ſo diffuſive, that it cannot produce particular dependence, or operate by partial influence. From this circumſtance it muſt be free from two great evils, and derive the like number of ſolid advantages. There is no fear of being obliged to chuſe teachers upon miniſterial recommendation, or in compliance with the overbearing weight of family intereſt. On the contrary, the truſtees are naturally led, and in a manner forced, to found their choice upon the characters of

the perſons, and the hope of public approbation. At the ſame time, thoſe concerned in the inſtruction and government of the college, are as far removed as the ſtate of human nature will admit, from any temptation to a fawning, cringing ſpirit, and mean ſervility, in the hope of court-favour or promotion.

In conſequence of this it may naturally be expected, and we find by experience, that hitherto in fact the ſpirit of liberty has breathed high and ſtrong in all the members. I would not be underſtood to ſay, that a ſeminary of learning ought to enter deeply into political contention, far leſs would I meanly court favour, by profeſſing myſelf a violent partiſan in any preſent diſputes. But ſurely a conſtitution which naturally tends to produce a ſpirit of liberty and independence, even though this ſhould ſometimes need to be reined in by prudence and moderation, is infinitely preferable to the dead and vapid ſtate of one whoſe very exiſtence depends upon the nod of thoſe in power. Another great advantage ariſing from this, is the obligation we are under to recommend ourſelves, by diligence and fidelity, to the Public. Having no particular prop to lean to on one ſide, we are obliged to ſtand upright and firm by leaning equally on all. We are ſo far from having our fund ſo complete as of itſelf to ſupport the neceſſary expence, that the greater part of our annual income ariſes from the payments of the ſcholars, which we acknowledge with gratitude have been, for theſe ſeveral years, continually increaſing.

2. This leads me to obſerve, that it ought to be no inconſiderable recommendation of this college to

thoſe at a diſtance, that it has the eſteem and approbation of thoſe who are neareſt it and know it beſt. The number of under-graduates, or proper members of college, is near four times that of any college on the continent to the ſouthward of New-England, and probably greater than that of all the reſt put together. This, we are at liberty to affirm, has in no degree ariſen from pompous deſcriptions, or repeated recommendations in the public papers. We do not mean to blame the laudable attempts of others to do themſelves juſtice. We have been often found fault with, and perhaps are to blame for neglect in this particular. It is only mentioned to give full force to the argument juſt now uſed, and the fact is certainly true. I do not remember that the name of the college of New-Jerſey has been above once or twice mentioned in the newſpapers for three years, except in a bare recital of the acts of the annual commencements. The preſent addreſs ariſes from neceſſity, not choice; for had not a more private application been found impracticable, the preſs had probably never been employed.

3. It may not be amiſs to obſerve on this ſubject, that the great utility of this ſeminary has been felt over an extenſive country. Many of the clergy, epiſcopal and preſbyterian, in the different colonies, received their education here, whoſe exemplary behaviour and other merit we ſuffer to ſpeak for themſelves. We are alſo willing that the Public ſhould attend to the characters and appearance of thoſe gentlemen in the law and medical departments, who were brought up at Naſſau-Hall, and

are now in the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, and in different parts of the continent or islands. Two at least of the professors of the justly celebrated medical school lately founded in Philadelphia, and perhaps the greatest number of their pupils, received their instruction here. We are not afraid, but even wish that our claim should be decided by the conduct of those in general who have come out from us, which is one of the most conclusive arguments; for "a tree is known by its fruits." It is, at the same time, an argument of the most fair and generous kind, for it is left to be determined by mankind at their leisure, and if the appeal be not in our favour, it must be unspeakably injurious.

4. The place where the college is built is most happily chosen for the health, the studies, and the morals of the scholars. All these were particularly attended to when the spot was pitched upon. Princeton is on a rising ground, from whence there is an easy gradual descent for many miles on all quarters, except the north and north-west, from whence, at the distance of one mile, it is sheltered by a range of hills covered with woods. It has a most beautiful appearance, and in fact has been found one of the healthiest places, as it is situated in the middle of one of the most healthful countries on the whole continent. It is upon the great post road, almost equally distant from New-York and Philadelphia, so as to be a centre of intelligence, and have an easy conveyance of every thing necessary, and yet to be wholly free from the many temptations in every great city, both to the neglect of study and the practice of vice. The truth is, it is to this happy

circumſtance, ſo wiſely attended to by the firſt truſtees, that we owe our being enabled to keep up the diſcipline of the college with ſo great regularity, and ſo little difficulty. We do not wiſh to take any honour in this reſpect to ourſelves. Doubtleſs the maſters of every college will do their beſt in this reſpect. But it is not in the power of thoſe who are in great cities, to keep the diſcipline with equal ſtrictneſs, where boys have ſo many temptations to do evil, and can ſo eaſily and effectually conceal it after it is done. With us, they live all in college, under the inſpection of their maſters; and the village is ſo ſmall, that any irregularity is immediately and certainly diſcovered, and therefore eaſily corrected.

It has ſometimes happened, through rivalſhip or malice, that our diſcipline has been cenſured as too ſevere and rigorous. This reproach I always hear, not with patience only, but with pleaſure. In the mouth of an adverſary, it is a clear confeſſion that the government is ſtrict and regular. While we avail ourſelves of this, we prove that the accuſation of oppreſſive rigour is wholly without foundation, from the number of ſcholars, and the infrequency of public cenſures, but above all from the warm, and almoſt enthuſiaſtic attachment of thoſe who have finiſhed their courſe. Could their eſteem and friendſhip be expected in return for an auſtere and rigorous confinement, out of which they had eſcaped as birds out of the ſnare of the fowler? We admit that it is inſupportable to the idle and profligate; for either they will not bear with us, or we will not bear with them; but from thoſe who have ap-

plied to their ſtudies, and reached the honours of college, we have, almoſt without exception, found the moſt ſincere, active, and zealous friendſhip.

5. This college was founded, and hath been conducted upon the moſt catholic principles. The charter recites as one of its grounds, "That every religious denomination may have free and equal liberty and advantage of education in the ſaid college, any different ſentiments in religion notwithſtanding." Accordingly there are now, and have been from the beginning, ſcholars of various denominations from the moſt diſtant colonies, as well as Weſt-India iſlands; and they muſt neceſſarily confeſs, that they never met with the leaſt uneaſineſs or diſreſpect on this account. Our great advantage on this ſubject, is the harmony of the board of truſtees, and the perfect union in ſentiment among all the teachers, both with the truſtees and with one another. On this account, there is neither inclination nor occaſion to meddle with any controverſy whatever. The author of this addreſs confeſſes, that he was long accuſtomed to the order and dignity of an eſtabliſhed church, but a church which hath no contempt or deteſtation of thoſe who are differently organized. And as he hath ever been in that church an oppoſer of lordly domination and ſacerdotal tyranny, ſo he is a paſſionate admirer of the equal and impartial ſupport of every religious denomination which prevails in the northern colonies, and is perfect in Pennſylvania and the Jerſeys, to the unſpeakable advantage of thoſe happy and well-conſtituted governments.

With reſpect to the college of New-Jerſey, every

queſtion about forms of church government is ſo entirely excluded, that though I have ſeen one ſet of ſcholars begin and finiſh their courſe, if they know nothing more of religious controverſy than what they learned here, they have that ſcience wholly to begin. This is altogether owing to the union of ſentiment mentioned above; for if you place, as teachers in a college, perſons of repugnant religious principles, they muſt have more wiſdom and ſelf-denial than uſually fall to the lot of humanity, if the whole ſociety is not divided into parties, and marſhalled under names, if the changes are not frequent, and when they take place, they will be as well known as any event that can happen in ſuch a ſociety. On the contrary, there is ſo little occaſion with us to canvaſs this matter at all, that, though no doubt accident muſt diſcover it as to the greateſt number, yet ſome have left the college as to whom I am wholly uncertain, at this hour, to what denomination they belong. It has been, and ſhall be our care, to uſe every mean in our power to make them good men and good ſcholars; and if this is the caſe, I ſhall hear of their future character and uſefulneſs with unfeigned ſatisfaction, under every name by which a real Proteſtant can be diſtinguiſhed.

Having already experienced the generoſity of the Public in many parts of the continent of America, I cannot but hope that the gentlemen of the iſlands will not refuſe their aſſiſtance, according to their abilities, in order to carry this ſeminary to a far greater degree of perfection than any to which it has yet arrived. The expreſs purpoſe to which the

benefactions now requested will be applied, is the establishment of new professorships, which will render the institution not only more complete in itself, but less burdensome to those who have undertaken the important trust. The whole branches of mathematics and natural philosophy are now taught by one professor; and the president is obliged to teach divinity and moral philosophy, as well as chronology, history, and rhetoric, besides the superintendance and government of the whole. The short lives of the former presidents have been by many attributed to their excessive labours; which, it is hoped, will be an argument with the humane and generous, to lend their help in promoting so noble a design.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

*Nassau Hall, at Princeton, New-Jersey,*
*March* 21. 1772.

JOHN WITHERSPOON.

Proper Forms of Donations to the College by Will.

*Of Chattels Perſonal.*

*Item*, I, A. B. do hereby give and bequeath the ſum of unto the *Truſtees of the College of New-Jerſey*, commonly called *Naſſau-Hall*, the ſame to be paid within months next after my deceaſe; and to be applied to the uſes and purpoſes of the ſaid College.

*Of Real Eſtates.*

I, A. B. do give and deviſe unto the *Truſtees of the College of New-Jerſey*, commonly called *Naſſau-Hall, and to their ſucceſſors for ever*, all that certain meſſuage and tract of land, &c.

*END OF VOL. VIII.*

J. RITCHIE, PRINTER.

Counsel + misfortune! 119.